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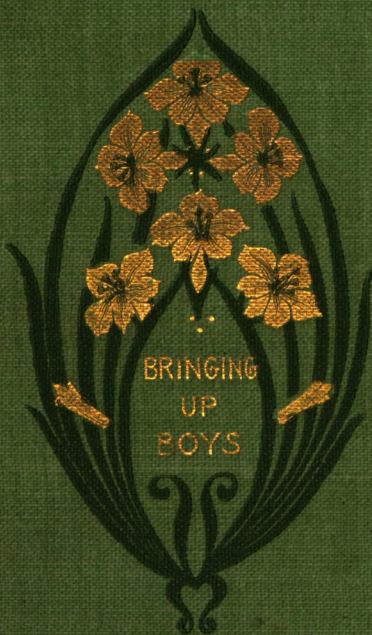
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BRINGING UP BOYS

A Study

BY

KATE UPSON CLARK

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P R E F A C E.

It is taken for granted in this volume that the boy is properly fed, clothed, and bathed, and that he has long, quiet nights of refreshing sleep. All measures which may be taken for his mental and spiritual improvement will amount to little unless he is given plenty of good food at regular intervals every day; unless he is bathed frequently and under proper conditions; unless he is suitably clothed; and unless he has sufficient sleep in a well-ventilated room, preferably one which is well sunned during the day. Discipline cannot be maintained with sick children, and without early discipline a strong and noble human being can scarcely be developed.

The boy is supposed to have passed his babyhood, and to have entered at least upon the knickerbocker period of his existence. His soul is like wax; his mind is reaching out inquiring tentacles in all directions. It is the time when life-long impressions are to be made, and when only the mother can guide the little hands and

feet in the ways in which they should go. If any hints which will help in such guidance can be gleaned from these brief and imperfect chapters, the author will be more than satisfied. The boy who is taught rightly and strongly at home may be trusted anywhere with confidence. According to the early training of the boy at home, so is he usually for time and for eternity, schools, colleges, and all his later life to the contrary notwithstanding. President Timothy Dwight, in an article upon this subject in the *Forum*, places first among the formative influences which shaped his life, the teachings and inspiration of his childhood's home. These were strengthened, indeed, during subsequent years by schools and teachers, but the predominant force for good lay back of all else in wise parental training. The great lesson of self-government, of compelling inclination to yield to principle, should be taught to a child by the ordinary discipline of home life before he is five years old.

Thanks are due for permission to use much of the material incorporated into this volume, to *The Congregationalist*, *The Outlook*, *Leslie's Weekly*, and the *New York Independent*.

BRINGING UP BOYS.

CHAPTER I.

TAKING BOYS SERIOUSLY.

THERE is scarcely anything more offensive than the boy who is permitted to talk continually in the family circle of himself, his achievements, and his intentions. He may acquire a habit of doing this very early, if not checked. A careful discrimination should be maintained between his remarks. When he is downright silly, he cannot be too soon silenced. When he is struggling to grasp a real idea, to express something worth while, he cannot be too kindly encouraged. Many fathers and mothers, mindful of the old maxim, "Children should be seen and not heard," stop the boy, no matter what he may be trying to say. Others ridicule him with equal inconsideration. It should be remembered that the general attitude of mind toward children should always be that of respect.

They should not be deceived, nor mocked, nor made fun of.

"Come home with me, my dear," said a lady from the city, who was calling at the home of one of her country friends. She was speaking to a charming little boy, perhaps two years and a half old.

"I should love to have you," she continued. "You could see the horse-cars go by, and we would go to the museum and see the big whale. Won't you go?"

The little fellow's bright, confiding eyes looked sweetly into hers. They did not detect her insincerity. They saw only kindness and admiration there, and he started at once for his coat and cap.

"Mercy!" cried the lady, shocked at his literal way of taking her words; "he thinks I am really in earnest! Bless you, dear! I couldn't carry you off. Your mamma wouldn't let you go."

Then, turning in apology to her friend, she added, "I never thought of his taking me at my word. It is too bad!"

The child gazed at her for a moment, his great eyes flaming with indignation. He flung down his little coat and cap with a gesture as imperiously contemptuous as a child's could be. Then he rushed to his mother's side, buried his

face in her gown, and cried hard and long. Wounded pride, disappointed hope, and utter bewilderment were expressed in his smothered sobs.

A poem might have been written then and there upon the undying impression of one's first experience in being deceived. The child's confidence had been abused, and he never forgot it.

Most of us believe that few children have what is called a sense of humor. An able woman once combated this position, but when asked to give an instance illustrating the humor of children, could tell only the following story:

A mother said to her child's nurse, "Mary, in about half an hour you may bring up Willie's l-u-n-c-h," spelling out the last word, as the urchin himself was present.

"No," broke in Willie, "I want my a-b-c gingerbread now."

He could not spell; but a nice ear for euphony, coupled with the words of the sentence, had interpreted his mother's mystery.

This story is amusing, but it does not show necessarily any sense of humor in the child. Except for an occasional joke or a fancy now and then apart from their daily routine, as many invest their dolls and other pets with life and its attributes, most children are earnest, matter-of-

fact little animals every day of every year. As they read and begin to live a life outside themselves, they enter, from time to time, the world of thought and imagination. It takes years, however, for that life to become blended with their real one, so that while treading the straight way which we all must go in order to be good citizens, they can still use a speech and enter into a thought-realm which may play upon and beautify the sordid things of every day.

Perhaps this is a special dispensation, in order that our children may be the more readily trained in such matters, especially in the line of wit and humor. A much quoted saying of a great poet is: "There is nothing in which people more betray their character than in what they find to laugh at." Blood, heart, training, all are revealed to the intelligent ear which hears a man's laugh and knows its cause. A child should be early instructed, chiefly by example, that when he is interested legitimately in anything, he should not be laughed at. The laugh of scorn, of ridicule, of sarcasm, a tender child should know nothing of.

"Mother," said a boy of ten, rushing in one day in great excitement, "we've got a dandy raft down on the river. Edgar 'n I have fixed it up, an' " —

"Mercy!" cried the mother, who knew that the river was shallow, and felt no further interest in the work there, "don't bother me now. I'm cutting out a sleeve, and I can't hear your nonsense. Run away."

This was that mother's way of taking her boys' communications. She had two sons, and she meant to do right by them; but before they were twelve they had learned that there was no place at home for the outpouring of their hearts, and they naturally sought sympathy elsewhere. The heart of a boy, if he is of the right stuff, is always full and running over. He needs a confidant. His rafts and magic-tables and morrice-boards are as mighty to him as the settling of the new minister, or the rise and fall of stocks, may be to his elders. His spirit recoils from the imputation that his affairs are "nonsense," with the same injured feeling as if he were a man.

Visitors in a certain family one day were much interested to see Phil, a boy of nine, come into the parlor and shyly pull his mother's sleeve. It was in the country, and the boy was in charge of a flock of hens.

"She's come off!" he began, with a face all sunshine. "Say," glancing at the guests, "may I tell you about it?"

The visitors of course begged that Phil be allowed to continue his tale.

"Well, my good hen's come off her nest," burst forth Phil, "and she hasn't lost a chick. There were twelve eggs, and there are twelve chicks. Aunt Mary says it's the best luck could be, and she thinks it is because I have 'tended to my good hen so."

"I don't doubt it," said his mother kindly. "I knew you would get your reward for being so faithful. I will surely come out by-and-by," — as he whispered to her. He rushed away, and she proceeded, half-apologetically, "I don't know but I make too much of my children's employments; but I have a theory that, if I dignify their pursuits by treating them as if they were worthy of my serious attention, it will make the boys more manly in their work. I take my sewing out every day, and sit beside the hen-house that Phil is making. I try to teach them that, as the poet says, it is better 'to pursue a frivolous art by serious means than a divine art frivolously,' — though I don't mean to intimate to them that I consider their work as at all frivolous, for it really isn't. It is the best that they are capable of undertaking, and I treat it with due deference."

Americans are accused of paying too much

attention to their children, and of making their affairs too prominent. The rule of "the golden mean" must be sought here as elsewhere. The moment that the sense of proportion is lost between the opinions of the child and the opinions and affairs of the parents, there is danger of spoiling him. The youngster knows at once when he has the upper hand, and he despises the mother who gives up to him when she should not. Children seem to know by instinct that "the stern refusals of wisely loving mothers are the mightiest of gifts." They may cry and protest at the time; but when the excitement passes off, they appreciate and are secretly glad that they have been properly dealt with.

"My mother," a boy of nine was overheard to say, "would have fixed that Rodolphus, in the Franconia stories. She would have made a good boy of him in less than a month."

"What would she have done?" inquired a curious playmate, with a spice of incredulity in his tone.

"I don't know," replied the boy, still with exuberant confidence. "You never can tell what she'll do; but she wouldn't have such works as his, — she wouldn't have them for one minute. It was because his mother didn't 'tend to him that spoilt Rodolphus."

No well-managed boy lives who is not glad in his soul, whatever he may say, that his mother makes him mind, and maintains a wholesome discipline. He is proud that she can do it.

Intolerable as conceit is, some risk must be taken in that direction in bringing up boys. It has grown to be a proverb that the proper dose to be given them every day is ten parts of praise to one part of fault-finding. The poet says, —

“The love of praise was planted to protect
And propagate the glories of the mind.”

Under the stimulus of judicious commendation, we can all perform feats which otherwise might be entirely beyond our power. In no other way can that confidence be engendered which is an essential aid to success. Self-confidence is one of the distinguishing marks of the character of every great man,—Washington, Gladstone, Bismarck, and thousands of others. It is the foundation of dignity. If we can give our boys dignity, — the outward sign of self-respect, — it is a gift greater than money. In order to do this, let us treat them with dignity, and their occupations and interests, not as if they transcended our own or the rest of creation's, but as if they were worthy of serious

attention. Thus we shall go a long way toward developing dignity in the child himself. The carriage of any individual shows unmistakably whether or not he is accustomed to respectful treatment. "There is nothing surer to make a human being respectable than to respect him." We rise to the level of the opinions held of us in nine cases out of ten.

Some one objects to this gospel of earnestness with children.

"Why do you deny to children the right of a jolly good time?" he says. "Let them play all they can. They will have enough of the dead-in-earnest in later life. Why not let them 'enjoy these short pleasures,' in view of the 'long woes' which are to succeed?"

Bless your heart, dear sir! Nobody wishes to do any such thing as diminish by a hair's breath the joys of childhood. One of the chief reasons why parents should receive their children's confidences seriously is because children like that way better than any other. Surely there is no happier home than that in which the lad flies to his mother's side the instant he comes in, knowing that the minutest detail of the day's doings will interest her, and that he is sure of her sympathy and counsel.

"My son," said a mother to a boy of thirteen,

who had just told her freely the story of a really disgraceful act of his, "I am so glad you came right to me with this!"

"Why, mother," said the boy with honest pathos, "I never thought of not telling you. I should die if I couldn't tell you everything. It makes me feel a great deal better, and you can advise me just what I ought to do."

The best of us make mistakes sometimes. What wonder is it that our boys, with their high spirits and their ignorance of the world, blunder and get into scrapes pretty often? It is a reason for rejoicing if either father or mother can get a hold on the young heart which may lead it to throw open its worst recesses to a parent's loving eyes.

"What was the use of all our seeking and blundering," says Goethe, "if you young people will not avail yourselves of the experience we have gained?"

A boy in the mood of the guilty one who has been described, gets this benefit, and it may perhaps save him "whole weeks' livings of vitality."

By instinct, a boy, if he be worth the raising, seems to feel that

"Life is a business, not good cheer,"

and he puts his hands to the occupations of life with impressive energy, often in a perfect frenzy over the passage of a train of cars through your dining-room. But check not these ebullitions of divine (if diabolically noisy) enthusiasm over what seem to you insignificant employments. "To the sentinel the hour is regal when he mounts his guard," and the child's easy enterprise is big with moment to him. Enter into his feelings, respect his "crazes," even if baseball be one of them. Study coins and flags and postmarks. Learn what robins, doves, and whippoorwills subsist upon, if you do not know already. All of this will not hurt you; and you could not make a wiser use of the time that it will take, for it may transform that *bête noir* of society, the half-fledged boy, if not into a thing of beauty, certainly into a comfortable companion, with a promise of a good deal more than that in the future.

It has been implied, and it should be emphasized, that the parents themselves should be the companions to whom the boy turns for this sympathy. It is seldom that any hireling, however high-priced and discreet, can be so good a companion as a father or mother. Don't put your intelligent boy away from you to be brought up. Remember poor Richard's proverb,

“Serve yourself if you would be well served.” If you are the father, the effort to set your boy a daily object-lesson in feeling and conduct will make you a better man, and constant association with him will give you a community of interest with him which will constitute you, before you know it, his most intimate and beloved friend.

Emerson has said somewhere something like this : that we send our boy to the schoolmaster, but that it is the shop-windows along the way which educate him. This is only another way of saying that whatever interests the boy most in his daily environment gives the strongest bent to his character. Why not make yourself the most interesting part of his environment, and thus be yourself the moulding influence of his life?

If the boy is reading a book, read it with him. It may not be very much of a book, but do not hastily belittle his opinion of it. Go gently about the work of correcting his ideas. If he loves a bicycle or a canoe, try to enjoy it with him. You can often get more time than you think. You sometimes wish you knew what he talks about when he is off with his companions. If you go with him yourself, you will have a chance to find out. If you have strong political

convictions, you can easily inoculate your boy with them during your long rides and walks together. No cut-and-dried rules will ever make him the sort of man you want him to become; but your own personality and the incessant application of your own ideals upon him will do the work, if anything can.

Parents may surround their children with all the scientific apparatus and all the art treasures to be had; they may hire the most highly recommended tutors and governesses for them; but they should not imagine that they have reached the root of the matter even then. The child needs first and foremost his parents' companionship, — just as personal influence is far more potent in all educational and ethical work than money or anything which money can buy. Your boy needs you, yourself. You are the one who can sympathize best with him, — who can take him as he should be taken, who can cherish in him that dignity and self-respect which must form the basis of character. No substitute whom you may hire, even at the most exorbitant price, can begin to do for him what you yourself can, if you are what you ought to be.

CHAPTER II.

THE BOY'S MANNERS.

A WORD, to begin with, regarding the surroundings of the boy.

Everybody has noticed the heightened grace of one's behavior when in one's best clothes. A certain lady once remarked a similar improvement when the furnishings of a room were elegant and tasteful.

She was boarding in a private family, composed of the father, mother, three large boys, and two younger girls. They had been well but plainly brought up; and the manners of the children in the pretty family parlor, with its piano, its dainty curtains, and its abundant books, were good. When they went into the dining-room, however, there was invariably a perceptible change in their behavior. They were constantly in need of reproof from their parents, and they as constantly received it. They took enormous mouthfuls, bolted their food, slid the dishes about on the table-cloth,

drank when their mouths were full of food, and were generally lawless and disagreeable.

On their return to the parlor, the boys became gentlemanly again, took pains to show interesting books and pictures to one another, and such guests as happened in ; were particular to say, "Excuse me," when leaving the room, and were generally charming companions. The girls underwent a similar transformation. From scrambling, greedy little hoydens they became gentle, quiet, lady-like.

It took some time to arrive at a solution of this family puzzle. Then it occurred to the observer that the appearance of the dining-room might have something to do with the changed conduct of the children while there. It was a bare, unsightly apartment, with a singularly unattractive arrangement of doors, shelves, and windows in it, while the furniture of the room and the dishes used were of the most ordinary description. There was a lack of thought and taste in the whole make-up of the place. Perhaps in a more æsthetic dining-room, the manners of the family would have been better.

Now we all know boors who live in fine houses, and we know gentle and refined people who live in rooms which are poorly furnished ;

but there is no doubt that manners, if left to themselves, will be influenced largely by surroundings. A refined environment helps to produce refinement.

But there are deeper evils, which no amount of beauty in floors and ceilings can relieve. They are to be cast out only by prayer and fasting of the spirit. One of these is the demon of ill-temper.

In a certain family there is one particularly cross member, who began when he was a baby by crying for everything until he got it.

"Don't make that child cry!" was the mother's piteous appeal, when someone, impatient of the tyranny in which the family was held, threatened to cut the thread which held the sword of Damocles. Better give up even the most cherished pictures in the house to destruction, hand over the frailest bric-a-brac, make any sacrifice, than to precipitate upon the defenceless household the deluge of wails which they all knew to be pent up within the lungs of this infant terror.

The baby ruler grows older; but experience having taught him the value of his gift of making things disagreeable for all those who stand in his way, he still holds the whip-hand.

"You'd better let him go to ride. He'll be

dreadfully cross if you don't," is the counsel of the peace-loving mother.

"He doesn't like those cheap clothes. Get him better ones, or he will make one of those dreadful scenes."

Any one who has watched the course of events in a family which is controlled by a tyrant of this sort, must have been deeply stirred by witnessing the sure succession of his triumphs. If the tyrant is a girl, she has better clothes, better school advantages, better times in every way, than the modest and well-behaved members of the family. Not that she is cross all the time, — oh, no ! she is too politic for that. Besides, she does not feel like it. Her cross fits are sandwiched in between periods of the most angelic sweetness. She is cross only when there is something to be gained by it. Later, she manages her husband according to the method which she understands so well ; but she is usually "come up with " by some one or two of her children, who inherit their mother's faculty. This is a source of delight to the observer who has watched her course from infancy.

The cross boy often gets the best toys, boats, horses, while his good-natured and yielding brothers go without, or put up with inferior ones. He is not generally popular ; but he has

power — something which he enjoys much better than love. He is thus able to get for himself nearly everything which his selfish, contemptible little nature craves.

When this Great Panjandrum condescends to smile, the household all expand and rejoice. They are plunged into misery when His Royal Highness is pleased to frown. If it were not pitiful, it would be very funny.

It is needless to say that the judicious parent early detects a weakness of this sort, and checks it at whatever sacrifice. A certain mother is in the habit of saying to her children, "You may not be able to make yourselves beautiful, or clever, or rich, or graceful, but you can be pleasant; and if you have a sunny temper, which anyone may have by patient cultivation, you may give more pleasure than if you had beauty and genius and wealth and grace combined. Whatever you are, however you feel, be pleasant and kind to those around you. Nothing will so endear you to your friends, and make you so beloved in society."

There is another kind of child who may give almost as much trouble as the cross one. He is not really cross, but he is impish and tormenting. He is known as the "born tease."

A lady one day was paying a social visit to a

friend, when she heard a sweet little voice singing, with a peculiar and unnecessary emphasis which she did not at first understand, the familiar refrain of "I want to be an angel." The voice was untrained and hardly rang true, but it would not have annoyed the lady who was listening. Not so with another hearer.

"Stop, Elsie, stop!" cried, presently, the irritable tones of Elsie's ten-year-old brother Chester.

"And with the angels stand," proceeded little Elsie, more quaveringly and louder than before. "A crown upon my" —

"Stop that! Mamma, sha'n't she stop that!"

The poor boy, who had a delicate ear for music, and was suffering from a nerve-trying, incurable disease, though able to run about and play a little, was evidently enduring real distress from his little sister's noise.

The mother stopped talking with her visitor a moment, and said sharply, "Elsie, stop teasing your brother. Chester, don't make such a fuss over a trifle."

Then she went on talking, as if there were nothing more to be done, in spite of the fact that the little girl continued to torment her brother by singing first one thing and then another which he did not want to hear. She se-

lected maliciously the sweetest Sunday School hymns, which were really all she knew, thus rendering her naughtiness more heinous. Chester tried at last to catch her, and stop her by force; but Miss Elsie was too quick and agile for him, and shouted out her little carols always just beyond his reach. Finally, incensed to a frenzy, he threw a stone and hit her. This sent her sobbing into the house.

"My darling!" cried her mother. "Chester, how could you do such a brutal thing to your little sister! Sit there, sir, and do not stir until dinner-time. Run out, Elsie, and ask cook to put vinegar and brown paper on the place."

"I don't care!" muttered Chester sullenly. "I shut her up, anyhow. She'll drive me crazy with her singing. She doesn't ever get it right. I don't mind having to sit here now that she's got to keep still."

"Aren't you afraid," suggested the visitor timidly, as she took her departure, "that Elsie will really injure Chester? He is very delicate, and I often hear her plaguing him."

"Mercy! I fancy all the rest of the neighbors do!" returned the mother lightly. "That child is a born tease. She torments Chester from morning to night, and I can't help it. He will have to get used to it."

"Help it!" cried the visitor to herself, with flaming cheeks, as she took her way homeward. "I would not allow that poor sickly boy to be made so wretched, — not for all the gold in India. Some way certainly could be devised to prevent it."

But she could do nothing; and Miss Elsie is probably teasing Chester or somebody else to this very day, whenever she feels in a teasing mood.

A woman once testified, with streaming eyes, that her sister, another "born tease," whose jokes at her expense the family were wont to laugh at, made her girlhood miserable.

"The one love-affair I ever had which meant anything to me," she said, "she teased me about so unmercifully that I let it all go, rather than endure her cutting ridicule. If I had been older and wiser, I might have stood up against it; but I was timid and gentle, and I simply could not nerve myself for the ordeal."

One mother tells the following amusing story of her first positive knowledge of the presence of a "born tease" in her household:

A boy three or four years old had been put to bed in a crib beside the couch on which lay his little brother of eighteen months, who was just learning to put words together. They had

been by themselves in the dark for about fifteen minutes, when the mother, passing the door softly, overheard the following conversation:—

Baby: "Pootsie go water, Tommy?"

Tommy: "No, pussies don't go in the water much. They like to lie under the stove."

Baby: "Pootsie go water, Tommy?"

Tommy: "I just told you pussies don't go in the water much. Now go to sleep. Mamma said so."

Baby (after a few moments' pause): "Pootsie go water, Tommy?"

Tommy (choking with anger): "I've told you two times. If you don't go to sleep, I'll call mamma."

Baby (after another pause, and with a malicious little note in his voice): "Doggy go water, Tommy?"

Tommy: "Not much. About the same as kitties. Go to sleep, I tell you."

Baby (after another pause): "Fishy go water, Tommy?"

Tommy: "Oh, yes, all the time. Now you *must* go to sleep."

Baby (after a longer pause, but imperturbably, and returning to his starting-point, having exhausted his limited knowledge of the names of animals): "Pootsie go water, Tommy?"

Tommy (now thoroughly enraged, and jumping up in his crib): "I've told you, and told you, and told you; and now if you say another word, I'll shout (shoot) your head off."

Here the mother interfered; and though she laughed when she thought of the little comedy in the dark, it was with a heavy heart, for she could see that there was a long and weary struggle before her ere she could hope to eradicate the love of teasing which was evidently already well developed in her beautiful baby.

The "born tease," when he grows up, unless he has been wisely and firmly dealt with, makes schisms in families, just for the fun of seeing his victims cringe. He makes husband or wife, as the case may be, perfectly wretched when the mood is on him. He breaks up happy households. He is a bane and a blight, under the ghastly disguise of a merry-maker. His little proddings and hectorings aggravate disease and shorten life. "It is as sport to a fool to do mischief," says the inspired seer; but, "as a madman who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbor and saith, Am I not in sport?" Does not this apply to the "born tease"?

It has been observed of many young people, that, though they may be cross, or render them-

selves obnoxious by teasing at home, they put on their good manners when abroad. Many a girl who is disagreeable and slatternly at home has successfully concealed her true character beneath a veneer of smiles and sweet words in society. Many a boy who is a bully and a brute at home is a Chesterfield abroad.

On the contrary, many who exert themselves to keep on good terms with their familiar friends make a discreditable appearance and reveal unfortunate traits when outside. Here are two examples of adults who possessed this peculiarity:

A New York lady one day entered a Broadway surface car, and a gentleman rose to offer her his seat. She said, "Thank you," and was about to take the seat, when a man suddenly slipped into the vacant place, pulled out a newspaper, and began to read earnestly. The lady had seen such things done before; and she would not therefore have been very much surprised, had she not recognized the occupant of what was by right her seat, as a distinguished doctor of divinity, lately imported into the metropolis from the West. He probably supposed that he was too much of a stranger to to be known by any one, but she had heard him preach several times and was sure of his identity.

Another lady was, not long ago, seated in a Brooklyn Bridge car during the crowded hours, when a woman entered, weighted down with various baskets and bundles. A man, empty-handed, followed her. A gentleman rose to give his seat to the poor woman, but the man promptly pushed in before her.

"I did not rise to give you my seat," said the gentleman indignantly. "It was for that poor woman."

"Dat is all right," said the man with a bright smile. "She is mine vife."

A thrill of horror ran through the women who heard this naïve disclosure. Yet the man did not look like a brutal or bad fellow. He was simply following the customs of his country.

It is the common testimony that the Japanese, judged by Christian standards of morality, are a profoundly immoral people; but they have the most charming manners in the world. Americans have brought our nation into disrepute in foreign countries by their shockingly bad manners on the streets and in places of amusement. We believe our private morals to be better than those of any European nation. Why can we not carry about with us in public that ease and grace and self-possession which mark even the poverty-bred Spaniard or Italian?

In the training of our boys, let us make a special point of their manners in public, while not neglecting "the weightier matters of the law."

But if bad manners are tolerated in the home, they will usually appear upon the street also. Indeed, though there is nothing, in a small way, more repulsive than affectation, and though most of us rebel at the term "conventionality," a certain conventionality must be observed at home, if the wheels are to move smoothly, and if the child is to be made a welcome member of society.

A well-known Massachusetts lawyer used to say, "There is too much formality in our homes, — too much 'Excuse me,' and 'I beg your pardon,' too much fuss and feathers, too much pecking and nibbling at our food, instead of honest Anglo-Saxon attack. We are too dainty, hyper-refined. Enervated modern taste demands that we submit to these affectations and airs abroad; but at home I will have no shams, no hollow ceremony."

The consequence of this good man's position, which he strictly lived up to, was that scores of visitors in his really elegant and hospitable home were dismayed at the manners of the family, especially their table-manners.

There was a fatal flaw in his logic. He went

upon the supposition that we are most attractive to our friends when we have laid aside the more or less artificial restraints which society imposes upon us. This is a mistake. We cannot always feel like making ourselves agreeable. Nevertheless, it is our duty always to do this, even though we may dissemble our real emotions in order to accomplish it. If we are taught that at home we may live out all our feelings, attempting no concealment, no matter how cross or contrary we may feel, we shall not be able to make ourselves agreeable outside. Society manners are based upon the manners of the individual at home. The habit of indulging in rudeness at home leaves an indelible mark upon us when abroad, even when we would give anything to hide it.

In large establishments, where an elaborate late dinner is served, it is, perhaps, not too much to expect the head of the house to don his dress-suit for dinner every evening. In a certain city, in at least two small households, in each of which only one servant is kept, the mistress of the home insists upon this daily formality. The husband is a hard-working man in each case, and can ill afford either the time or the vital force to make such a change. The children in these homes are brought up like

martinets. Undoubtedly they have too much conventionality. Again a plea must be entered for the golden mean.

Two boys, aged respectively twelve and fourteen years, were once attacked with scarlet fever, in a form so mild that they were not for an instant debarred from their usual pursuits, except that they were ordered by their physician to be confined in one room for six weeks. The largest and pleasantest room in the house was given up to them. The books and games which they liked best were moved up there, and everything was arranged for their comfort. Then their mother, who had established herself their attendant, sat down for a serious talk with them.

"Now, boys," she said, "here we are for six weeks. I will do everything I possibly can for you. The waitress has gone in terror, but the cook promises to stay by us, and she and I will try to devise wholesome and appetizing dishes for you; but your happiness depends chiefly upon yourselves. You can follow either one of two courses. You can spend these six weeks in grumbling over your hard lot, in finding fault with each other, and quarrelling and snatching; when you are tired of this close confinement, as you inevitably will be. Or you can make it a point to cultivate a patient and contented spirit,

to utter nothing but kind words, to wait for whatever either wants until the other is through with it, be very particular about saying, 'Thank you' and 'If you please,' and, in short, treat each other with great consideration. I should advise you to imagine that each one of you is a foreign prince of great consequence come to visit the other, and treat each other accordingly."

This conceit pleased the boys; and the six weeks passed, not without some shadows, it is true, but on the whole with great pleasure to all concerned. Those boys still talk of "that beautiful time we had when we had the scarlet fever."

The children of a home generally behave as their father and mother behave. A man who habitually treats his wife and her opinions with respect, will find his children treating her in the same way. If he speaks crossly and unreasonably to them, they may not dare to retaliate upon him, but they will surely speak in the same way to their mates. If a father is always ready to spring to his wife's assistance, to place a footstool for her, to hand her work-box, to read to her passages from books and papers, and to listen thoughtfully to her comments, the children will pattern after him. Such children will form

what are conventionally called good manners, but they will wear them unconventionally.

It is the fashion for serious people to sniff at "society." It is composed, in the opinion of those who are not in it, of idle, luxurious individuals, who are chiefly concerned over what they shall eat, drink, wear, and amuse themselves with. Their employments are assumed to be rather childish, and their aims purely selfish and worldly.

In spite of noble exceptions, this view may be accepted as approximately correct; but there is one thing which the leisure of society has enabled it to do, and by which all of us may well profit. Society inaugurates dainty and beautiful manners and customs. There may be little heart back of them; but pleasing and refined customs are in themselves good, and worthy of imitation. Let us cause them to be practised in our homes. If the dress-suit cannot be donned conveniently every night for dinner, let there be a change of raiment on the part of both parent and children on certain days for that commonplace festival. Whatever easy pomp is within reach, expend upon it. Eating will not be too elegant, no matter how much of glamour we may throw around it. Josh Billings remarked once something to the effect

that good-breeding can make even a fool agreeable, which is true.

It is pitiful to see a gifted man suddenly exposed to the stares of society after a life of seclusion. If he is gentle, he bears it without other demonstration than that of a not unpleasing diffidence ; but sometimes the thought of his own superiority in essentials will madden his spirit, and in his embarrassment he blusters and blurts out his contempt, until he has given his inferiors an infinite advantage over him.

He who has the self-possession and art of your true society man has a weapon for the world's battle which he is a fool to scorn. The self-poise which permits the free handling of his own faculties in the presence of a throng of brilliant, chattering people, is one of the most important qualifications for success which a man can obtain.

The funny papers are never weary of descanting upon the flatteries of your society dame. "How are those beautiful children? I shall never forget how sweet they looked that day when I peeped in upon them in their nursery! And how is your precious mother? What a marvel she is! Everybody speaks of her wonderful crazy-quilts. And your husband? How able that man is! All the lawyers are talking

about his brief in the L—— case.” . And so on *ad nauseam*. But is it not possible to give our children such standards of taste that they may learn to say the agreeable things of society without lying or making idiots of themselves? At least we can try.

CHAPTER III.

BOYS VERSUS SENTIMENTALITY.

It sometimes seems as if boys were destitute not only of that emotional sentimentality which is so characteristic of little girls, but of all genuine sentiment. A mother, who is also one of our most distinguished writers, once related of her three-year-old Victor that he was very fond of playing with fire. She had said everything that she could think of to cure him of his dangerous passion, but so far she had produced little effect upon him.

"I will tell him an awful story about fire," she decided at last. "It shall make him creep all over, and I fancy he won't want to touch fire any more for months."

She accordingly related to him the terrible fate of a naughty child who had meddled with matches. She pictured, with all the skill acquired in years of novel-writing, the scene when the bad little boy's clothes caught fire and he was "burned to a crisp."

Little Victor listened with intense interest, and welcomed the *dénouement* without even a sign of horror. On the contrary, he seemed rather pleased.

"And now, mamma," he said with enjoyment, "you have told me about a little boy. Tell me next about a little *girl* who was burned to a *crips*."

Upon another occasion her two boys had been playing with her so roughly in the early morning that she told them they had given her a pain in her heart.

"That means heart-disease," she tried to explain to them. "If you play so hard and don't mind me about it, your poor mamma will die."

As she entered the breakfast-room, little Victor was balancing a spoonful of cracked wheat in his hand.

"Yes," she said, "if you do not learn to be more gentle, I shall be dead before you know it."

"I'll bet you," said Master Victor, holding on to his spoonful of wheat with the air of giving a manly challenge, "I'll bet you I can eat up this wheat before you can begin to die!"

Of course, this indifference was largely because the child did not realize the meaning of

the awful words which he was using, but it was also partly because the mind of the boy is naturally averse to dwelling upon the emotional aspects of life.

Victor's older brother, on the contrary, often revealed a wealth of real sentiment in his soul. One night, when he was about five years old, he fell asleep in his mother's arms. When she put him into his bed, she kissed him again and again, and called him pet names. He was so sleepy that he could not kiss her in return; but he murmured drowsily, as if to comfort her for his seeming indifference, "Mamma, my — heart — is — listening — to — you."

"Mamma," said a usually cold and unsympathetic little boy of six, "which do you like best, the bright new flags, or the old ragged flags which have been in the battle?"

It was a gala-day, and the child with his mother was just passing a public building, gayly decorated with bunting. Directly over the door of this great edifice, showing pathetically among the unstained banners which had seen no service, hung a cluster of the old battle-flags.

The mother perceived by the boy's tone that the sight of these flags had struck deep into his childish heart.

"Which do *you* like best?" she said.

"Oh," he replied with a quivering lip, "I like best the old ragged flags that have been in the battle, — oh, a great deal! — don't you?"

The mother had not realized before what a true and deep imagination and tender heart might lie beneath an exterior which a boy usually tries to make as impassive as possible. She determined to drive a wedge in, as soon as possible, where the battle-flags had entered.

A brother of this child, as in the case of the other pair of brothers who have been mentioned, was from babyhood very tender-hearted. One day his Uncle Tom, who had been exceedingly kind to him, placed a twig in the little boy's hat just before bidding him good-by for a long absence. The next morning, in preparing him for his daily drive, his mother saw the withered twig, and started to pull it out. The child, who was two years and a half old at the time, seized it with an exclamation of distress.

"Don't oo take 'e leaves out 'e baby's hat!" he cried earnestly. "Unc' Tom did 'tick 'em in 'e baby's hat."

That child had sentiment in abundance.

Probably the endowment of feeling in the

human heart varies in different individuals, just as the amount of brains varies in their heads. There is all the more reason, therefore, why a mother should gauge as early as possible her children's capacities in this direction, always ready to cultivate with the greatest care whatever tiny plant of sentiment she may find in one little nature, while pruning and keeping back the too luxuriant emotional development which may confront her in another. Girls should be scrupulously limited in this direction. There is seldom danger, as has been said, that a feminine nature will lack sentiment. Ten to one it will be mawkish. Boys, on the contrary, are likely to avoid even legitimate displays of emotion. No one is more jealously afraid of overstepping the delicate boundary line between sentiment and sentimentality than your genuine boy. This is not a bad thing, but the boy should be carefully taught just where that boundary line lies.

"The man of sentiment," says an old writer, "is your only true gentleman." A distinguished man, in describing a public character to a friend, remarked extenuatingly, "You would scarcely think it, but he is really a man of some sentiment."

Many a mother has learned from her boy a

great deal concerning this matter of sentiment. A mother's heart is always overflowing with love for her child. She longs to kiss him, to embrace him; but her son is not always ready for this emotional demonstration. A little boy of nine, who was just beginning to get about after an illness, was sitting on a couch, looking over his playthings, when his mother entered, after an hour's absence among the adjacent markets.

"Oh, my darling!" she exclaimed, throwing her arms around him in a passionate embrace. "I am so happy to see you getting well again!"

The child straightened himself with dignity.

"Don't you know, mamma," he said with some sternness, "people must have air in them, or else they can't breathe? Now you will squeeze all the air out of me, if you hug me so tight. Besides, I'm busy now."

The mother felt as if the child had the right view of the case. She also felt well assured that he was not going to die at once. For several days she laughed until the tears came whenever she thought of the reproof which he had given her. There is, indeed, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing.

Families in which kisses and caresses are too common grow up with a wrong basis of sentiment. Lavished too freely, they leave no lan-

guage in which to express the deepest emotions. A certain sacredness should attach to such demonstrations; but in some families they are as common, and possess as little significance, as the earth beneath one's feet.

Comparatively few people laugh or cry in the right places. Very few are angry at the right things. Thus the whole philosophy of life, if not corrected, becomes, year by year, more and more awry. If we can teach our children to respond aright in their hearts to the sentiments which are uttered in their presence, we shall have done a great deal toward starting them in the way to become men and women of proper feeling, instead of people who are always liable to "dilate with the wrong emotion."

"You can't do it," some aver. "You can't love and hate and rejoice and mourn by rule. If a child has it in him, he will develop a right sentiment. If he hasn't, he won't."

This is not true. The feelings have got to be trained exactly as the mind and body. The boys who have been used as examples in this chapter varied greatly in natural capacity for sentiment, but their mothers will testify that they noted marked changes in response to training. As with brain-power and muscle-power, right exercise and proper care will do wonders

for your cold and unresponsive child. If you treat him aright, read and talk on the right subjects with him, single out for especial comment the incidents on which wrong sentiment might be awakened, and indicate the feelings which should be roused instead, such a child will expand in a way to gladden one's soul. The wilderness will blossom as the rose.

For example, there is the emotion of gratitude. We are told that the world is full of ingratitude. Proverbs and experience alike teach us that benefits are likely to be forgotten entirely, even if real enmity is not given in return for them. On the other hand, how much training is generally given to children in the matter of thankfulness? Usually very little.

"But," some one objects, "one does not want cut-and-dried gratitude, doled out from a sense of duty. Gratitude should rise spontaneously when one receives a kindness."

Yet we do not expect spontaneous honesty, spontaneous purity, spontaneous temperance, spontaneous courage, spontaneous charity, nor spontaneous politeness. We understand perfectly that children must be laboriously instructed in nearly all of the virtues before they can practise those virtues spontaneously and naturally. For every child who is born with a

natural taste and aptitude for goodness, at least ten are born with no such proclivities, or with those for the direct opposite.

In the first place, do we dwell enough, either in example or precept, upon the propriety of regarding prayer quite as much as a means of expressing gratitude to God, as for making known our wants to him? If we expect to succeed in developing the noble virtue of thankfulness in our children's souls, we must make much of our acknowledgments to God of His goodness toward us. We should endeavor to arouse our children's sensibilities upon the subject, to make them acutely feel, as well as talk of, gratitude to God. Would there be so many long, sad faces among us, if we ourselves properly felt our mercies, and lifted up our hearts as we ought to thank our Father for them?

A gentleman not long ago sent some valuable postage-stamps to a little boy, who, though he had at first taken such gifts as, in a way, a right due him from the world, had been carefully taught, over and over, that it was really a great favor for a busy man or woman to gather together such stamps, and take the trouble to send them to a little boy like him, who would probably never be able to make any proper return for them. A picture had been drawn by the

mother, of the busy man getting the stamps out of his box or desk, selecting very choice ones, writing the letter to accompany them, sealing, stamping, and posting it, perhaps even sending to the express-office, or himself taking there, the package of stamps. As the boy greatly disliked to perform such little labors himself, he had gradually become impressed with the very great kindness of any one who went through them all in order to afford a child like him a pleasure. He accordingly sat down at once, and composed a most grateful letter to the gentleman, who immediately wrote back, saying that though he had sent stamps under similar circumstances to many boys before, he had never happened to find one who was polite enough to thank him for them. "And the letter was not merely a token of your politeness," he said. "There were signs of a real appreciation of the trifling trouble which I had taken to please you."

It is easy to imagine that those "other boys" had never been taught the virtue of thankfulness.

A book comes one birthday to little Ralph. He says, "Oh, grandpa has sent me a book! How nice!" and throws it carelessly aside. Books from grandpa have been coming at intervals ever since Ralph can remember. He takes

them as a matter of course. You pick up the book, and turn its leaves.

"See here, Ralph," you say. "Here is a swing such as you had up in the country, and here is a chapter about a taffy-party, and a picture of it, too, just such a taffy-party as grandma had for you when you visited there the last time. How thoughtful grandpa is! He probably gave a good deal of time to selecting this book. And just think! He remembers the little boy's birthday, though you never think of his. How very good he is! Don't let a moment pass, my son, before you write to thank him. He will be doubly pleased if you are prompt. Remember, grandpa is old. He cannot send you these little tokens much longer. You can never do much for him probably, compared with what he does for you; but at least you can show him that you appreciate his kindness."

If you have chosen your words well, the heedless little heart is quickened; and though a little more persuasion may be necessary before the letter is fairly written, be sure that the child is more civilized and has truer feelings for your efforts.

Day after day, in varying phrases to suit each case, dwell upon the thoughtfulness which has provided this, which so many might have for-

gotten ; the tender love which has prompted that ; impress to-day, to-morrow, every day, the duty of substantial returns for kindness received, not as compensation on a commercial basis, but as the only self-respecting and noble way of receiving favors. Show that a debt of favor is just as binding as a debt of money, even though it is beyond the reach of the law.

Good poetry is, perhaps, the very best thing to develop right sentiment in a child. "Poets," says Mrs. Browning, "are the only truth-tellers left to God." But not all so-called poets are genuine ones. These modern days have seen arise a class of clever word-jugglers, whose object is to eliminate all sentiment from their verses, and to create only admiration for their dainty word-work. This is as destitute of soul or soul-stirring power as are the productions of some of our cleverest contemporary novelists. They will do your children no good, except as studies in literary expression ; but the older ballads, the ringing voices of the older lyrists, with strong extracts from the great works of Shakespeare and Milton thrown in as the child can bear them ; in short, any verses which have lived long enough to prove their right to life, and which a young mind can grasp, — these will make sentiment sound and strong.

The one vein of sentiment which exists in even the lowest natures and is common to every race, is the love of home and the mother. The best people usually love best these universal fetiches. "The passion for home," says one of our great writers, "is the first characteristic of manly natures."

By the judicious fostering of this spark, a wise mother may make a great deal of even a hard, cold disposition. Such a woman will never share the feeling of one singular mother, who remarked that she was "sick and tired of the everlasting question, 'Where's mother?'" with which every member of the family entered the house." The true mother realizes that in the question "Where's mother?" may lurk the only drop of sentiment which a certain child may have in his composition. She guards and strengthens his love for her and his dependence upon her. If she must be gone when he returns from school, she tells him beforehand, or leaves word where she has gone, showing him that she appreciates and reciprocates his devotion.*

A lady was calling recently upon a friend, when a small boy came bounding in at the basement door about four o'clock in the afternoon, with the usual inquiry, "Where's mother?" "Oh, I remember," he added immediately, "she

said she was going to the mothers' meeting. I wish she would hurry up and come back."

"She didn't go," said the good-natured Irish girl, to whom he had been speaking. "She had word the meeting was postponed."

"Oh, goody!" cried the urchin, leaping up the stairs two at a time, and bursting into the room where the ladies were sitting. His face was wreathed in smiles, but his shoes were muddy. He ran to his mother's side, and imprinted a very wet and resounding kiss upon her cheek.

"Oh, Tommy!" she cried, in a reproachful voice, though she kissed him tenderly; "look at your foot-prints on the carpet."

"Well, I didn't mean to," he said regretfully, saluting her visitor boyishly, "but I was so glad you were at home. Here's my ball for you to sew up, and here's the geography you were going to cover, and may I go over to Will Smith's corner with my roller-skates? There's such a daisy sidewalk over there!"

Verily, well may a mother forgive much in such a case! Blessed is she who can answer the children's question, "Where's mother?" with a glad "Here I am," and hear their sweet words of joy in her presence. They will have no dearth of sentiment, and sentiment of the

right sort, if she will only deal rightly with them.

Explain carefully to your children the difference between true and false sentiment, between cant and true religion, between honest high literature and mere well-expressed platitudes, between living for the applause of the multitude and living for the approval of God. If we can teach our boys these things, and make them passionately long to cleave to the noble and true, we may feel that we have done our best to make them men of right sentiment. Above all things, teach them never to despise the generous impulses with which their own intuitions or your patient teaching may have inspired their childhood.

A boy of six had been taught by his mother that many people think they will do certain things when they have the means, but after they get opportunity fail to accomplish what they once thought they would. One day he broke out with, "Oh, dear! I am so sorry for the poor people! When I get to be a man, I am going to build a great big house, and I am going to let all the poor people live in it. But," he added with a sigh after a moment's reflection, "prob'ly I won't do it, will I, mamma? I think now I will; but when the time comes, prob'ly I sha'n't."

The mother was shocked at the application which had been made of her teaching.

"Oh, don't be sure!" she cried. "People who don't know better, fail to do these things; but not my little boy, I hope. I look forward to the time when you can study and carry out all sorts of wise plans for making the world better and happier; and I hope you won't forget a single one of the good things which you have planned to do. Some people are apt to forget, but I hope *you* won't."

"Be true," said the noble Schiller, "to the dream of thy youth." And Heine prayed, "O ye gods! I do not beseech ye to spare me my youth, but to leave me the virtues of youth, — disinterested wrath, disinterested tears!"

CHAPTER IV.

PERSONAL DEFECTS AND PECULIARITIES OF THE BOY.

IN almost every family of children there is pretty sure to be one (or more) who squints, or stoops, or talks in a head-tone, or has some other physical peculiarity which his parents feel confident can be cured if the child can only be nerved up to try and overcome his weakness. The great danger in the matter is that the parents will become weary of trying to combat what seems to be a firmly fixed habit, and let the child alone. This is fatal. Alter your tactics, and make the onslaught from another quarter, constantly changing, if necessary, until some improvement is visible. To let the child go his own way is generally to graft upon him some semi-deformity, or at least a disagreeable peculiarity, which will hinder his success in life, both socially and professionally. Occasionally an instance occurs in which letting alone is just what is needed, but this is rare.

Very many of such faults as have been mentioned arise from weakness of body, often caused by deficient nourishment, or lack of sleep or exercise. Actual disease is almost always accompanied by the formation of unfortunate physical habits, and it is while recovering from illness that most of the disagreeable little ways which cling to a child are formed. When health and strength return, these ways often disappear of themselves.

Braces are of little use in most cases to assist children in standing erect. If your stooping child is near-sighted, make him wear carefully fitted spectacles when trying to see objects, and do not allow him to hold them any nearer to his eyes than necessary. If the perpetual, "Stand straight, — do, dear," or, "Thrust your chest well forward," accompanied by vigorous practical help in the desired direction, seems to lose force with him, and he grows no better, it is often a good plan to speak of the admirable carriage of such or such a child, in a casual way, never too pointedly. It is well, also, not to select the same standard of comparison too often. Older people have often testified that they grew to have an aversion for a companion with whom their

parents would have been delighted to have them associate, because the perfections of that particular child were too frequently held before them for imitation.

Before punishing for continued indulgence in a forbidden practice, like squinting, or biting the nails, try the system of rewards, and see that they are discriminatingly bestowed. Show as much interest as possible in the progress of the little conqueror. No one knows what children suffer sometimes in trying to overcome a firmly rooted habit.

"Haven't sucked your thumb (or your tongue) once to-day, Benny! Isn't that good? I am so glad! Two days more, and the month will be up, and you will have your croquet set. If I can help you, let me know. Perhaps you will sit right here and do your studying. I won't say anything to disturb you; but if I see your thumb going up, I can warn you."

Tying the hands behind the back with a silk handkerchief for a half hour or an hour at a time, or applying some harmless bitters to the fingers, will often correct habits like sucking the thumb or fingers. The training of the voice is usually the hardest matter of all, but it should be persisted in through everything.

Americans are accused, and probably with justice, of having the most disagreeable voices and the worst intonation among all the nations. A hopeless feature of the case, when a reform is attempted, is the ignorance or indifference which prevails among us on the subject. Women and girls are, however, harder to deal with in this matter than boys. The former can sometimes become fair singers, while still wearing the closely fitting, and inevitably compressing garments of the time; for the singing tones are formed in the upper chest, where the deadly corset allows comparative freedom. The talking voice depends usually for its sweetness upon deep abdominal respiration, and this is impossible when there is even slight restriction of the waist. Boys, thank heaven, are as yet free to breathe; and their talking voices are incomparably better than those of girls.

The obtuseness of our compatriots on this subject is illustrated in the case of an intellectual woman, a college graduate, who has a tone so nasal and flat that a stranger, hearing only that, would conclude her to be entirely uneducated. She herself would deeply resent the insinuation that she "talks through her nose." If such an exclamation is wrung from one as,

“What a pity that Mrs. A. does not attend more carefully to the voices of her children!” it is often met with, “I do not notice anything wrong with their voices.” Most of our fellow-countrymen do not recognize even a serious failing in this respect.

Those who desire to remedy such defects must first learn to discriminate regarding voices. They must then bring to bear the most impartial criticism upon those under their charge; and while taking care not to push their treatment too far, they should not allow the matter to rest until the throat of the patient is well opened, the breath properly placed, and a pure, musical tone produced.

For this purpose, exercise in reading aloud or declaiming should be daily taken under the charge of a competent teacher of voice culture (if home training prove ineffective). See that the breath is drawn from the abdomen, a full deep inspiration with every expansion. It is usually an insufficiency of breath which causes harshness and hardness of tone. An indolent habit of body may produce this insufficiency, or it may arise from actual weakness or disease. In either case, a remedy cannot be too promptly applied.

When one realizes the power of a sweet

voice, a power not surpassed, perhaps, by beauty of face and form, the wonder grows that a nation like ours should be so slow to appreciate it. It outlasts everything else. Age dims the eye, fades and wrinkles the complexion, bends and deforms the figure; but the sweet voice will linger until the very end, a charm and a weapon which can scarcely be too highly prized.

Most boys greatly dislike dancing-school; and many parents, though they may have none of the old-time prejudice against dancing, on moral grounds, excuse their boys from attendance upon dancing-school, in order to save the expense of it, and of the small niceties of apparel which are required in such a place. Sometimes these boys, like the young gentleman "who did not dance," in the college song, prove more attractive than those who have studied that graceful accomplishment; but most observers will agree that a thorough training in a good dancing-school gives a boy an ease of carriage and a freedom of step which he cannot acquire in any other way, while membership in an afternoon or early evening class insures him against the loss of sleep, which is the chief, and a very serious, argument against all dancing-parties.

A boy who has been persistently taught to do in earnest whatever he undertakes, should learn in a winter or two at a good dancing-school to take the principal steps and to go creditably through the best-known dances. More than all, under such discipline, a naturally clumsy and diffident boy — and nearly all boys who amount to anything have a period in their lives when these adjectives describe them, especially if they have grown early to a large size — becomes capable of entering a parlor without walking all over the ladies' trains, or making any of those "bad breaks" which even a well-bred youth may commit when he is embarrassed. The sufferings of bashful boys, even those who have been brought up in refined homes where guests are frequent, are often very great when thrown among strangers. It is a mercy to them, and to those with whom they come in contact, to see that they are instructed and rehearsed in that self-possession and propriety of deportment among strangers which are rarely to be acquired outside a dancing-school, and which are almost always gained there. Of course, it goes without saying that only the best dancing-schools should be selected, and those where the class of patronage is most refined. It is even more necessary in dancing than in

anything else to see that it is practised only in the best society.

In the severe and merciless competition of modern life, no legitimate element should be neglected which may tend to secure success. Many a boy has shot ahead of his fellows of equal merit by means of his ready manner, his bright face, or some other purely superficial quality. The first object in the training of a child is, of course, to secure his moral integrity and a love for true religion. Second in importance comes the discipline of his mind; but next, the wise parent should surely consider the formation of those manners which will be most likely, when he shall be launched into the world outside his home, to gain for the boy a favorable consideration of his more solid qualities of heart and mind. Ungainly movements, a head habitually thrust forward, a heavy, lubberly step, and the painful self-consciousness which usually accompanies these defects when they are under inspection, are distinct and sometimes decisive handicaps upon an aspiring youth. Often they make a disagreeable first impression, which only the most brilliant inner gifts and the most heroic will-power suffice to overcome.

A boy much devoted to music was told by his mother that it was proposed to send

him to dancing-school during a certain season.

"Oh, why?" he complained bitterly. "I have been going steadily for two winters, and I hate it; and by going on the evening that you have set, I lose that fine series of classical concerts which I was planning to attend."

"One winter of your dancing-lessons was useless to you, as you had a poor teacher," replied his mother. "Last winter you improved a good deal; but you still do not hold up your head properly, and your walk is not what it should be. You have a lifetime before you for the enjoyment and study of music, but your gait and your carriage will probably be fixed by the time you are eighteen or nineteen. Your father and I are so fully convinced of the importance to you of a manly bearing and a dignified and easy step, that we should feel guilty and should expect you to reproach us in after-life with a neglect of duty, if we did not make an effort this winter to improve you in these respects. There was probably never a man who regretted that he had been trained in a good dancing-school. Hundreds and thousands have deplored that they had never enjoyed such an advantage. We cannot make you beautiful," she added, 'nor endow you with the mind of a Bacon, nor

the wealth of Cræsus ; but we may perhaps help to give you something of that ease of manner and movement, which, before a man opens his mouth in any assembly, has already commended him to the favorable opinion of those present."

It is not silly nor in any way unworthy to desire for one's self and one's children that grace of movement which many wise ones rate far above mere beauty of form and feature. A natural talent gives some an advantage over their mates in this as in every other respect ; but the parents of even the awkwardest boy or girl will be legitimately gratified to find his or her ungainliness greatly ameliorated by a sufficiently long term of instruction under a painstaking teacher of dancing.

Hazlitt, in his delightful " Letter to a School-boy," observes, " As to your studies, I wish you to learn Latin, French, and dancing. I would insist upon the last more particularly, both because it is more likely to be neglected, and because it is of the greatest consequence to your success in life. Everything, almost, depends upon first impressions ; and these depend (besides person, which is not in our power) upon two things, dress and address, which every one may command with proper attention. These are the small coin in the intercourse of life which

are continually in request." The author goes on then for some little time enlarging upon the desirability of the "superficial recommendations," which boys are wont to despise until the world charges them dearly for these deficiencies.

It is apt to be the case with only children, or those who have been for any reason unduly pampered, that they come to have peculiar habits of eating. It seems to be a pleasure to some parents to discover odd tastes in their children, to encourage their development, and to humor the misguided little things to the top of their bent. The needlessness of these peculiarities is implied in the fact that in members of large or very poor families they seldom exist. Undoubtedly such children also evolve strange conceits in this line from time to time; but they run their little courses, like all infantile fads, and if not unduly emphasized and brought forward, soon disappear. Many children like to be conspicuous, and it is usually only while a child's personal habits are much noticed that he will consider it worth while to deprive himself of the good things which he sees others enjoying. Parents should nerve themselves to break up in their little ones all abnormally peculiar tastes and habits, if for no other reason than the

inconvenience and annoyance which such habits are sure to cause others in later life.

A spoiled child is a terror to hosts on many accounts, but perhaps he is most dreaded on account of his generally depraved and erratic appetite. One unusually trying little boy named Lyman could not, or chose to think that he could not, eat butter or drink milk, or eat anything into the composition of which milk or butter prominently entered. It may be imagined what a cheerful guest Master Lyman made, — and only one of his many idiosyncrasies has been mentioned. The housekeepers who tried to entertain him had a delightful time. A certain little Walter had to have his beefsteak cooked more than any one else, his eggs boiled three minutes longer, his salad dressed differently from that of the rest of the family, his gravy deposited upon his meat in such a way that no drop of it should touch his potato, and so on. He had other vagaries on the subject of food which are too numerous to mention here. The relatives all groaned when they heard that Walter was coming to pay them a visit.

Both of these young people, after spending their early lives in small towns, and very monotonously, took extended trips abroad. When they came back, a number of their provincialisms had

vanished, and among them their "notionalism" in the matter of eating. Their unworthy, selfish little habits had gone. They no longer exalted their capricious little appetites into fetiches, whose whims were to be seriously studied and obeyed. They sat down to well-spread boards, and ate like other people, or, as the saying is — and it is a reasonable and reverent one — "like Christians."

Nothing shows lack of culture, ignorance of society, and the absence of those advantages which travel supplies, more than what is colloquially called "notionalism" in eating. These considerations will sometimes affect those who will not properly weigh the fact that it is in itself unworthy of a noble soul to allow one's comfort to depend so much upon mere caprices of the palate. Ill-cooked and poor food should be endured by no one, except when it is absolutely necessary; but ordinarily well-prepared tables should be unhesitatingly enjoyed by all who sit at them. "Every creature of God is good," and "Eat what is set before you for conscience' sake," are rather sweeping recommendations, and doubtless not intended to be taken literally; but in their general and proper sense, they mean much, and are respectfully called to the attention of the class of people under discussion.

Parents are the real offenders in the matter. They have no right to allow their children to grow up with such offensive proclivities. By attacking them gently and gradually, paying as little attention as possible to the matter, but watching carefully lest habits become too firmly seated, they may often be eradicated without severity.

For the sake of health, some delicate individuals are obliged to appear "notional" when at their meals; but in the interest of our cooks and housekeepers, if from no higher consideration, let the "notionalism" stop at the health limit. The children who can use only certain kinds of soap, wipe their faces only with certain kinds of towels, wear only certain kinds of materials, and so on, deserve quite as vigorous attention.

Some boys are unduly pugnacious, and try constantly to pick a quarrel with their mates. This little eccentricity should be rooted out at once. Many times it arises from the irritation caused by ill-health, some defect in digestion or nervous balance, which causes no great apparent physical disturbance, but which makes itself felt chiefly in that vague, though very real, part called the temper.

A certain mother feared that she was about

to encounter a difficulty of this kind in her little son, when he came in from the sidewalk, which was his principal playground, two days in succession, with the report that a neighbor's child had struck him. He had been taught that under no circumstances should he strike or hurt anybody.

"You must have made faces at him, or called him names, or have done something to provoke him," the mother insisted. She did not think it possible that a being could exist who could wantonly lift a hand against her precious darling. She did not then know so much about boys as she has since learned.

The child declared that he had done nothing wrong; and on the third day he was naturally timid about venturing again upon his playground, but his mother assured him that she would watch him every moment, and he sallied forth.

A half-hour later he was playing innocently with a little cart, when the obnoxious boy, who was perhaps a head taller than himself, came swaggering along and demanded the cart.

"If you don't give it right to me, I'll strike you," he declared.

The trembling youngster yielded up his cart immediately.

"Now I'll strike you anyway, 'cause you're so 'fraid," proceeded the little bully; and he was about to make his word good, when he was arrested by the righteously indignant mother, who personified for the moment—

"The million stars which tremble
O'er the deep mind of dauntless infancy."

From this moment she altered her training. She taught her son that he must give his playmates to understand that he could not be attacked with impunity; that whoever struck him or insulted him did so at his peril; that he was to follow the old advice:—

"Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee."

"Pluck and you will be a match for anybody," she told him.

The speedy reduction of the little bully followed, and the child went on without further trouble from similar characters.

CHAPTER V.

KEEPING BOYS BUSY.

"ROBERT," said a mother one day to her ten-year-old son, "here is a note for Mrs. C. Please take it to her at once."

Mrs. C. lived fully a mile away. The boy glanced sharply and disapprovingly at his mother.

"Now, mamma," he protested, "you're just making up that errand on purpose to keep me going. Isn't that so? I want to play; do let me."

"No," said his mother firmly. "I am sorry to interrupt your game; but I see Tommy Miles coming, and when Tommy Miles comes, you must always go. Yet I want you to have the open air, and you will enjoy the walk when you are once well started."

Her words confirmed the boy's suspicions; but he knew his mother had the right of the case, and he trudged obediently away.

This mother was a member of a "Home

Life " club. At a meeting of this society one day the subject was the training of boys. Robert's mother, Mrs. J., had just delivered herself of certain emphatic sentiments upon this very theme, when one of the other members said, "I judge, Mrs. J., that you think it right to make up errands just for the purpose of keeping boys busy."

"I not only think it right to do so," returned Mrs. J. quietly, "but I am constantly reproaching myself that I do not make up more." She quoted at her neighbor Mrs. Browning's oft-repeated lines:—

"Get work! Get work! Be sure
That it is better than anything you work to get."

But her sceptical friend was still unconvinced.

"I think it is pretty hard on the boys," she objected, "when they have worked all day in school, and have just got started on a good game, that they should have to trudge a mile or two on a useless errand. It would be bad enough if there were a necessity for it."

"But," argued Mrs. J., "the errand is not useless. Nothing is useless which serves a vital purpose, though the note or the ball of yarn to be carried may be little needed or of small value. A sense of occupation, and the

occupation itself, and the keeping him out of mischief are worth more to the boy than anything else could be."

"But should boys have no time for play, pure and simple?" asked the critic triumphantly.

"I play games with my boys nearly every evening of my life," responded Mrs. J., "and on many a stormy afternoon; but you must remember, my friend, that our town boys" — for these ladies were obliged to bring up their boys within the confining walls of a city — "do not have the resources of the country to fall back upon. They have no pet lambs nor heifers nor flocks of chickens with which to busy themselves. They cannot hunt for eggs, nor cut 'feed' for the animals, nor do any of the healthful 'chores' which give country boys plenty of interesting employment every day. The few games which our narrow streets permit, I love to have my boys enjoy. On the school playground, under the supervision of teachers in whom I have confidence, or within sight of my home, I consider them well enough occupied when they are playing leap-frog or 'black Tom' or any such plays; but I must always know just where they are. This is most necessary. Therefore they usually have to play

near home ; and among the miscellaneous crowd of boys who gather even in our best streets for play, there are always some with whom, when she knows their character, a good mother would not let her boy associate, any more than she would let him touch pitch.

“When I see one of those boys coming, or when I hear hard words rising, or when the game takes a turn of which I do not approve, be sure an errand is devised on the spot, though I never interfere unless I feel obliged to. Often some favorite companion accompanies the boy upon his journey ; and there are charlotte-russes, or a pound of candy, or some other favorite dessert to buy for dinner. As many mitigating circumstances are made to surround the errand as possible. I often wish,” added this hard-hearted mother, “that I had some regular work for those boys to do every day out of school. A boy who is busy rarely gets into mischief. I believe nearly all vice can be kept away from a boy or driven out of him by filling his mind with good and absorbing thoughts. I would get an evening paper-route for my children, only there are so many who need the money more that I cannot bear to have my boys stand in the way of those others. I would get the neighboring butchers or grocers to allow the boys to deliver

goods for them, but for the same reason. It is in art and philanthropy alone," she added parenthetically, "that it ever seems right for the rich or the well-to-do to disregard the competition of the poor. In art we must have the best work of the best brains, be the worker rich or poor; but in common, every-day avocations the poorer fellows must have the best chances, and our boys must step aside. It is a constant problem how to keep them busy."

Still, in nearly every home, some sort of steady, helpful work may be and should be devised for every member of the family. Impress it upon each child that, in more ways than one, home is the dearest spot on earth. It is the place we love best, and it is also the thing which costs the most of our heart and brain and money. The labor attendant upon keeping up the average home is incalculable. The husband and father toils all day for its support. The mother spends most of the hours between sunrise and sunset in active exertions to make and maintain it as a clean, wholesome, comfortable abiding-place. To all who are housekeepers on a moderate income, the inevitable work of home-making, though the best intelligence may be brought to bear upon it, and though we may simplify it as much as possible, looms up before

us occasionally, and seems greater than we can bear.

There are the putting away of the summer clothes and the preparation of the winter ones, and *vice versa*; the cleansing and sweetening of packing trunks and bureau-drawers; the periodical overhauling of the attic and cellar; the renewing of pillows and mattresses; the upholstering of worn pieces of furniture; the sorting over of old papers and magazines; and the kidnapping of some superhumanly busy boy or girl, who has absolutely no time for such trivial pursuits, to carry any reading matter or half-used garments, not needed at home, to some charitable distributing station. Then there are pictures which have grown time-stained and dusty under the glass. They are not fit for the walls any longer unless something is done. Tottering "crickets" and wobbling *chiffonnières* must be attended to. Screen doors and windows must be repainted. The garden must be worked over. The wringer must be repaired. The doormats are suddenly discovered to be in a state of hopeless decrepitude. The sweeping-covers must be washed. The curtains must go to the cleaner, the decent furniture must be brushed and covered, — and yet all these things are mere incidents of the greater operations of regular

housekeeping and house-cleaning. When one thinks of the carpet-lifting or floor-waxing, the paper-hanging, the paint-scrubbing, the interminable procession of breakfasts and dinners and suppers and luncheons, the complications of the servant question, and the constant financial calculation necessary to regulate the whole machine, one is overcome at the prospect.

But the child realizes nothing of this. It might not be wise to render him too cruelly conscious of it, for it might make him miserable. He ought thoroughly to understand, however, that the price of a home is very great, and, since he reaps part of its benefits, that his duty is to perform as much as possible of the work which must be done to keep it up, — that he should be willing to pay his share of this price. Without complaining of them, the mother may show him something of the difficulty and expense attendant upon the maintenance of this precious nest, which is the field of supreme delight to every right-minded person, young or old. It is then but a step to the lesson that every individual who shares the blessings of the home should help in its conduct by some form of daily, regular labor, which he can see is a real contribution to it. We all err in this matter. It is a great deal of trouble, first, to decide what a child can

do best ; second, to teach him to do it ; and, third, to see that he does it after he is taught. Therefore, we continue to do the work ourselves, or to put it upon already overworked servants. In this way we foster selfishness and a lack of consideration for others in our children. We cannot too strenuously pursue them with the doctrine that, if they enjoy the pleasures of a home, they must also help to provide those pleasures. Never lose an opportunity to emphasize the sweetness of home. Make your children love their home above everything else, and teach them to look forward to sometime having a dear home of their own ; but make them realize that it can usually be secured only by toil and irksome responsibility, and the pouring out of heart's blood, though worth it all, and more.

Still, all this does not often go far toward keeping the boy busy out of school-hours. Even if you make him assume the feeding of the bird, or the winding of the clock, or the splitting of the kindlings, or the tidying of his own room, — all of these take him but a few moments, and then he is off again, and in mischief, before you know it.

When one stops to reflect upon it, that our town-bred boys should dream of ever attaining great eminence, seems absurd. Read of the

legions of the famous who have sprung from our country districts, and then count on your fingers the city boys who have ever gained the top of Parnassus. Has this been because the country boys learned habits of industry more thoroughly than their urban brethren ?

And, again, does it not seem nonsense, in the light of history and biography, to expect much of boys who have always had 'decent clothes to wear and three meals each day !

Think of Daniel Webster, studying voraciously as he ran the logs through his father's saw-mill ; of Samuel Drew, a "bundle-boy" at eight, a shoemaker's apprentice at eleven ; of Benjamin Franklin, with his loaf under his arm ; of Robert Burns, grubbing in the soil until he was grown-up ; Henry Clay, the "mill-boy of the slashes" ; John Leyden, tending sheep upon the Scottish braes ; Nathaniel Bowditch, a ship-chandler's apprentice ; David Livingstone, at ten a "piercer" in a cotton-factory ; Samuel Crompton, carding, spinning, and weaving nearly every moment when out of school, and at fifteen tending the loom continually ; Mozart, obliged to hammer away at operas or anything that he could get pay for — his biographer says, "he had no childhood ;" Oliver Evans, Robert Fulton, John Kitto, Amos Lawrence, Jacques

Lafitte, George Peabody, Bayard Taylor, Bertel Thorwaldsen, and hundreds whose histories are more familiar, — such as Oliver Goldsmith, Michael Faraday, Horace Greeley, William Lloyd Garrison, Meissonier, Abraham Lincoln, — but why prolong the endless list? As one contemplates it, one feels like apologizing to one's own children that fame has been put farther away from them, and made harder to gain, by the exertions of their parents to protect them from grinding poverty. It is not the one who is "wafted to the skies on flowery beds of ease," but he who has learned to "endure hardness," that is likely to be most stable and manly. Yet what uncounted millions have been hurled to destruction by the vice which usually follows in the train of bitter poverty! Let us all offer with full hearts the wise prayer of Agur.

Men have tried to point out the "elements of success." They have mentioned poverty and riches, help and the lack of help, education and the absence of education, but they cannot define the elements of success. "That by which a man conquers in any passage is a profound secret to every other being in the world," says Emerson. Yet, surely, a distinguishing characteristic of all who achieve a high place in the world has been the power of persistent work.

In this light, the keeping busy of our boys becomes important, not only to prevent them from getting into mischief, but as a necessary qualification for doing any special work in life.

When one reflects upon the narrow span of human existence, it is seen that there is little enough time in it for the accomplishment of a great task, make the most of it that we may. Think of the hours which the poor, weak body requires for sleep, for the taking of food, for exercise in the open air, for the making of a merely decent toilet. No wonder that the Squire of Murewell shook his head when he heard that Robert Elsmere could give only his mornings to his profound historical studies. "Work is the weapon of honor, and who lacks the weapon will never triumph."

The direction in which one expends his effort is of quite as much consequence, however, as the effort itself. In this age, boys are brought up too largely to regard the attainment of great wealth as the prime object of existence.

"I am sorry that your husband has not been more successful," said a stupid rich woman to the wife of a comparatively poor but distinguished and high-minded professional man in the West. The latter was dumfounded by the offer of such condolence.

"My husband not successful!" she exclaimed with cutting emphasis. "I have never thought of his career except as most successful. I am proud to my heart's core of his success. I only hope our children will be half as successful."

The wife of a well-known artist once said, "I would punish my boy if I heard him avow that the efforts of his life should be devoted merely to the amassing of wealth."

Yet, still, while the right development of the heart and life, and the honest doing of a useful work in the world, should be the most prominent objects held before the young, and Christ's awful warning to the rich should be constantly impressed upon them, a proper regard for thrift and the accumulation of a good competency should be assiduously cultivated. It is a good deal worse, not only for the feelings, but for the character, to be dependent upon others for support, and to have no provision for one's old age, than it is to be a millionaire!

The proper object of life to our boys is too often vague and hazy. If it were not, there would be fewer suicides, and far fewer broken-spirited and embittered men. A boy must be taught that he must not allow his happiness to depend upon the winning of wealth or fame, or the accomplishing of any special work in life;

for in the stifling competition of this age men are too likely to fail, even when they put forth their best exertions. It must be recognized that circumstances beyond our control often land a prize at our feet, when we have deserved no prize; and they often waft one out of our reach, and bestow it upon some one far less worthy, when we have done everything a mortal could do to obtain it. Happiness must be built upon something more solid than wealth or fame, or the doing of a great deed. It must be found in the daily performance of duty; in the sweets of little things; in congenial friendships; in loving children; in a peaceful home, no matter how humble it may be; it must be found in the great realities of life,—love, religion, duty, nature, art, literature,—those things which are within the reach of every honest, God-fearing man.

The laziness and indolence which poison us all must stoutly be combated in our boys. Activity, the evolution of a strong and forceful character, must be stimulated by every means in our power. Energy is a chief element in manliness, and no success is possible without it. "A man is forced to be vehement, and even rough," says Goethe, "if he would keep his head above water." All that we can do for our sons is to teach them to aspire to high things, and

to furnish them with the weapons. The fortune of the fight is beyond the control of our bravest boys, and beyond our own. They feel so confident in their youth and strength that they cannot imagine failure ; but the rest of us have seen barks even better equipped than theirs go down before the awful blasts which are sure to blow as the years go on, coming ever from the most unexpected quarters. These poor young things must be taught that happiness lies deeper than any earthly tempest can reach ; and then all we can do is to bid them God-speed.

It would be a good thing if every boy should have hanging in his room, where he will be sure to see it every day, these familiar lines, which no amount of repetition can ever rob of their power : —

“ Labor is life; ’tis the still water faileth.

Idleness ever despaireth, bewaileth.

Keep the watch wound or the dark rust assaileth.

Play the sweet keys, would you keep them in tune ! ”

CHAPTER VI.

"SHALL THE BOY SMOKE?"

[IN these days, one of the most insidious temptations which assail the small boy is the cigarette.] It is safe to say that there is not a boy in five hundred who has not tried to smoke a cigarette, "just to see what it is like," before he is ten years old. If the father smoke, it is almost inevitable that by the time your boy has attained college age he will be, whether you know it or not, a confirmed smoker. The fashion seems to possess a fascination that is irresistible to the average boy. [It seems to impart that smartness and distinction to a boy, in his own eyes, that a corset, that greatest modern engine for the deterioration of woman, imparts to a girl.] The hold of fashion, in spite of the pride which we feel in our increasing civilization, seems to grow tighter and tighter every year. It binds our children, in their smaller sphere, even more cruelly than it binds their fathers and mothers. It is torture to a sensitive

boy or girl to be obliged to wear a hat or a coat which is not like those that "the rest" are wearing. They want to do the same things that their mates do, and to lead approximately the same kind of a life.

One of the first great principles which should be firmly implanted in the youthful breast is this: because the majority pursue a certain course, that course is not, therefore, necessarily right. Teach your children that, though it is never dignified or wise to oppose a fashion just because it is a fashion, on the other hand, it is never right to fall in with a fashion just because it is a fashion, especially when there is a moral reason for rejecting it. Fashion should from the first be held up as a dangerous tyrant, whose mandates are too often dictated by interested rings, wanting only to make money for themselves. Especially should any encroachment of fashion upon health be exposed, and the evil made clear by every method of exegesis that ingenuity can devise. Fable, anecdote, sermon, poem, quip, jest, familiar converse, — every form of written and spoken speech, — should be brought to bear upon the child, until he is so permeated with the right views, that, unless he be one of those weaklings who are unable to cherish great moral convictions, he will be irrevocably set to

do the right, fashion or no fashion. The matter of smoking should be thus treated.

Hardly a day passes without a conflagration in some part of the country from pipe-ashes or a smouldering cigar-stump. Such fires may be commented upon, and the value of the property lost compared with the fleeting enjoyment of the smoker. If you will write down incidents which you hear, and save printed paragraphs, you will soon amass a volume of warnings against smoking which will be sufficient to deter almost any thinking boy from ever touching a cigarette or a cigar. The grip of conventionality and the force of example, however, if there are smokers in the family, will very likely upset reason, moral conviction, and religion, as they have been upset in scores of cases within the knowledge, probably, of every reader of these lines. The hold of the smoking habit upon our people is simply appalling, especially in the face of the fact that it has absolutely nothing in its favor, except that it affords a fleeting satisfaction, so soon gone that the craving for more becomes constantly greater. Economy, health, and family affection are often outraged by it; yet such is the slavery of the smoker to his habit, that he will almost strip himself of everything that he has, rather than give up his fetic.

The following facts concerning smokers and smoking may well be impressed upon growing boys. They can be largely augmented from almost any one's private knowledge and experience.

The case of General Grant is too well known to need more than a mention here. Though certain physicians deny that his smoking was the cause of the throat-cancer which killed him, and though cases are adduced of men who have died from similiar cancers, and who had never smoked, yet the preponderance of opinion is that, with his peculiar constitution and temperament, smoking must have been the mainspring of his disease. In a certain large city there lives a heart-broken widow, who has scarcely smiled since her husband fell dead in the street six years ago from smoking. He had been warned that he would die suddenly if he did not quit the habit, and he had several times announced that he was leaving off a cigar each day. Then he would call himself a fool for believing that there was anything the matter with him, and would resume his usual limitless indulgence. Then he would have a little attack of heart-palpitation, and would begin to "draw in " again, as he called it ; but the end came like a thief in the night.

During the same week that this gentleman died, a well-known citizen of the same place, a club man and a general favorite in society, fell dead in a car from over-smoking. The wives of these two gentlemen had been school-mates in their youth. This latter victim left his affairs in great confusion. The distress which his sudden death brought upon his family would wring tears from your eyes if it could be told here ; yet he, too, had been warned for more than a year that he must give up smoking, and he was only waiting to "feel a little worse" before he would reform.

A man well known to both of these gentlemen is lying at this writing at the point of death in the same city. He, too, has known for more than a year that he had probably contracted an incurable disorder of the heart from smoking. He immediately began to "taper off," as smokers are advised to do when they find they have gone too far ; and by three months he had stopped altogether. He looked like a skeleton, his nerves were a wreck, and he had suffered almost inconceivable tortures ; but he had at last shaken off the fiend which was sucking his life-blood. It was too late, however. He is gradually dying, and no human power can save him. It is for the sake of his wife and his three chil-

dren that he has made this gallant fight for life. They are plunged into gloom and mourning; but the man had a number of years of the heavenly delight of puffing smoke out of his mouth, which must now be a support and consolation both to them and to him. He leaves his family in destitute circumstances, but his widow may be able to take boarders and worry along somehow.

Every one would remember, if his name were mentioned here, the death of one of the brightest and most popular writers in this country a few years ago from a cancer caused by over smoking. There was never any doubt as to the cause of his trouble. The cancer was cut out several times; but he was unable to give up smoking, and his death was from the first recognized as only a few years off at farthest. During those frightful years his young wife's beautiful black hair turned snowy white. Fortunately by her extraordinary talents she has been able to support herself and her young children since his death.

A well-known bank-officer in an Eastern city died a few years ago from heart difficulties brought on unmistakably by smoking. He left a widow and five children. Three years later she followed him to the grave, having previously buried two of the five children. She had been

through sorrows enough in consequence of his loss to have killed the strongest woman in the world. He had been in an almost irresponsible condition for months before his death; and in order to keep along with his exacting work, he had smoked incessantly, often having to rise in the night and light a cigar in order to stop the terrible gnawing of the horror in his heart. After his death his affairs were found to be in inextricable confusion. His widow wrestled with her misfortunes for a while; then her reason began to totter and she died a poor, heart-broken, mindless creature, another victim to the curse of smoking.

None of these are instances which have come to the writer's notice by mere hearsay; they are matters of intimate personal knowledge, and the half has not been told.

In relating one of these cases to a distinguished editor, he remarked that he had known during his lifetime at least thirty instances, and he had heard credibly of as many more, of men who had begun to smoke through good fellowship during their teens, and had never thought that they were receiving any injury until they were between thirty and forty, established in life, surrounded by growing families, with everything to live for, when they were

startled to learn that they were well on the road to death, and usually too far gone to escape, even by immediate reform.

"I could tell you some of the circumstances of these cases," he said, "to which what you have told me would be insignificant. I may say that I have never known such awful anguish as has been brought into families by the results of smoking; because the victims are usually young or in middle life, and have not yet amassed enough to leave their families provided for."

In a certain city, not long ago, a prominent doctor of divinity, a man of about sixty, fell and cut his elbow. The hurt did not heal, and the most capable medical skill was called in. Still the hurt did not heal. In a few weeks blood-poisoning set in, and the man died. The physicians agreed in saying that undoubtedly the good doctor's inveterate smoking had so deteriorated his blood that he had been unable to rally from what at first seemed a slight injury.

Not many miles from the residence of this gentleman, lived another famous clergyman, who is also a great smoker. He was obliged to undergo a surgical operation, from which he was assured that he would soon recover. But he did not soon recover. Blood-poisoning and other

operations followed in a nightmare succession. At this writing, this excellent man lies between life and death; though if he had not smoked, his attendants say there would probably have been no trouble in healing his first comparatively slight ailment.

[When a doctor was called in to attend a recent case of appendicitis, his first question was, "Does the man smoke? If he does, I fear I can do little for him."

Some physicians advise men to smoke. If they have asthma, or any one of several other difficulties, smoking is said to afford relief. One such man is just now recovering from a long and painful illness, which has cost him several hundred dollars, and will cost him more before he gets quite well. He changed doctors during his illness. His new physician told him that his disease had been primarily caused by smoking.

"Why," said the poor fellow, "I have been advised to smoke. My doctor said it would be good for me. I am not one of these fools who are bound to smoke, anyhow. I would have given it up long ago, if I had had any idea that it was bad for me."

His first doctor had been a smoker himself, and the opinion of smokers upon other smokers

is naturally somewhat cloudy. At a recent Freshman debate between two colleges, the board of judges was composed entirely of the graduates of one of those colleges. Their decision was rendered for their college. When it was pointed out to an undergraduate in that institution that this was a sort of a farce, he replied, "Well, their men might have refused to accept the judges. If they were such fools as to accept those judges, why, they must bear the results of their folly."

A man who has any reason to suspect that smoking does not agree with him is anything but wise to go for advice to another smoker.

But hard illness and death are not the only consequences of smoking. There are millions of way-stations between health and death, and most smokers are at one of these. For instance, a certain man of some culture, who is naturally as good-natured as most men, and perhaps even more so, smoked so continually that he grew painfully nervous. Every noise made by his children drove him almost wild, and he spent a large part of his time when with them in scolding them. The family fairly dreaded to have him come home. A frightened look passed over his children's faces when his form was seen approaching. His wife lost all her

spirit, and became the pale, quiet wraith of her former self. She would have given her life to have her husband stop smoking, but she knew that all expostulation would be worse than useless. A few wives like to have their husbands smoke, but the great majority of women would give anything if there were no smoking in their families. The time to have settled that question, however, was before marriage. Girls are often, perhaps usually, so anxious for popularity among "the boys," that they hasten to seize every opportunity for saying, "Oh, I'm not one of those delicate little things who can't bear tobacco smoke! I enjoy it. Do keep right on. I love smoking." The girl who dares to say that she dislikes the habit,—a very different thing from disliking the odor of good tobacco, which is delicious to most people,—fears that she will get the reputation of being a "crank." If all girls were brought up to abhor tobacco as they ought, and to feel that they cannot marry men who smoke, the amount of extravagance and misery in the world would be sensibly lessened, because the amount of smoking would inevitably be diminished.

It is said that almost any man can stand a cigar a day without harm. This may be true, but even the man himself will usually admit

that he would be better off without it. Many who are thoroughly convinced of this fact keep on smoking a little each day, because they wish to retain the habit in order that at dinners and other entertainments where the men are all expected to smoke in the interests of sociability, they may not appear awkward, nor experience any of the ill effects which sometimes come to smokers who are "out of practice." It would be a blighting mortification to be found clumsy at a cigar, and to experience nausea upon smoking. What man could have the courage to acknowledge such a weakness! One great trouble with us mothers is that we do not instruct our sons carefully enough concerning the things which they ought to be ashamed of, and the things which they ought to be proud of. At present, most men's ideas on these subjects are badly mixed.

The tender tissues of the growing boy cannot stand even a moderate dose of nicotine each day without speedy, and often fatal, effect. A certain youth in a large preparatory school has been obliged to give up his drawing, and his ball-playing, and all pursuits which require a steady hand. He has been smoking only two or three cigarettes each day; and his mother had no suspicion that he had ever touched one,

until his hand became so tremulous that she felt obliged to take him to a physician, who at once diagnosed his case correctly.

A charming gentleman, a minister of high standing, was afflicted in this same manner, but it was through no fault of his own. His father had been a smoker, and had thus acquired tremulous hands. The son had inherited them, and, worse still, his eldest daughter, a lovely girl, has also inherited them; so that the third generation has already paid the penalty of one man's excesses. This poor girl cannot fill a cup with tea nor pass a glass of water at the table without spilling it. Her children will, not improbably, inherit the same weakness. Such cases are not rare.

Tobacco is like alcohol in many respects, in the effects which it produces upon its victims; and the resemblance is perhaps most marked in the kind of selfishness which it begets. A confirmed smoker will see his family suffer before he will deprive himself of his favorite diversion. Even so-called Christian men are no exception to this rule. A certain young man of this class really thought a great deal of his wife. She was a delicate, tenderly reared girl, who belonged to a much better family, in many ways, than his own. For a while he was prosperous,

and was able to take good care of her. When they had been married about three years and had one dear little baby, there was a business crisis in the town. The young man lost all that he had, and was obliged to begin life over again.

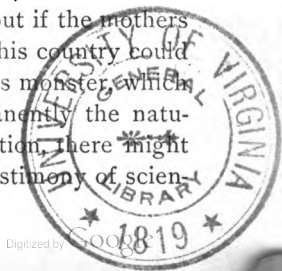
His young wife did not mind this. She gave up her servants, and began to take her baby out herself in its little carriage, and to do all her housework. Everybody thought that her husband would also give up something. Perhaps he did, but he did not give up his smoking. His cigars and smoking-sets were lying around as usual; and he was offering a cigar—he was one of those highly organized beings who can smoke only the best tobacco—to every friend of his who came in. His poor wife struggled with her own washing and ironing and all kinds of rough and heavy work to which she had never been accustomed. If he had given up his smoking for a year, it would at least have paid for the family washing and ironing for a year, but he had no idea of thus inconveniencing himself. He preferred that his wife should ache all over, day after day, as she often did. He might have been quite as brutal, even if he had not saturated himself with smoke; but the narcotic effect of the poison upon the

system is undoubtedly to put the finer feelings to sleep, or dull them so that they make but faint protest against outrages like this.

Old Joshua Sylvester wrote, during the first incursions which the smoking habit made into English society, —

"How juster will the Heavenly God,
The Eternal, punish with Infernal rod,
In Hell's dark furnace, with black fumes to choak
Those that on earth will still offend in smoak."

This savors of fanaticism, but it is said that no radical revolution in social or political customs is ever accomplished without fanaticism somewhere. Mothers are too indifferent to this terrible evil; but they know well that they cannot influence their children by their precepts, when the example of smoking fathers is constantly before their sons' eyes. "How can I hear what you *say* when what you *are* is thundering so in my ears?" said the seer. The fathers have eaten the unripe grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge; but if the mothers and sisters and daughters of this country could only unite against this insidious monster, which threatens to undermine permanently the naturally strong American constitution, there might be hope. It is the common testimony of science



tific men that the children of smokers are degenerates to a greater or less degree, and that the degeneracy, like all inherited tendencies, is handed down from generation to generation. If both the fathers and mothers should smoke, and if such great strides were not making in hygienic reforms in other directions, short work would be made of the race. We should die out like the Indians, and only our small literature and the few scraps of solid masonry that we possess would be left to tell our history. It has been asserted by some statisticians that there is less smoking now than ten years ago. Until this assertion is supported by plain figures, it will seem incredible, in view of the smoking to be seen on every side, at home and abroad. It is well enough to be hopeful; but the mothers of this country must realize that they have a task before them if they desire to uproot this terrible evil, as they almost unitedly do, which will require constant thought and labor and prayer.

Boys will not usually be much affected by statements of the number of houses and lots which a smoker might have bought during a certain period, if he had saved his money, instead of wasting it on tobacco. Still, it is well enough to have these statistics ready to hand,

and to tell them how many loaves of bread apiece might be provided for the poor with the money spent for tobacco. Such statistics are always more or less unreliable; but there is no doubt that, if this money were fairly divided and carefully expended, the prosperity of the country would be greatly increased.

The chief objections to the smoking habit which will appeal to your boy are, first, that it will probably stunt his growth, and, second, that athletes are not allowed by their trainers to smoke. Explain to him that the reason why athletes are not allowed to smoke is because it is not good for their health, especially for the health of the nerves, and that all boys should want to be well quite as much as athletes. In several of the American colleges, valuable records have been kept for a number of years regarding the effects of tobacco upon physical development. A study of these records proves that young men who have never smoked are on the average decidedly taller and heavier, and have a much greater lung capacity, than smokers; while the latter are often offensive from bad breath and expectoration.

Facts like these will usually affect boys more than any amount of abstract argument and tearful entreaty.

CHAPTER VII.

GAMES AND ATHLETICS.

THERE is nothing in a small way which is a more crucial test of the moral nature than the playing of certain games. One or two little stories may illumine this point.

A mother was one day sitting quietly at her sewing in a corner of the piazza, when her two daughters — girls of thirteen and fifteen — came up the steps and toward her from the croquet-ground. They looked flushed and perturbed, and flung themselves heavily down on the light bamboo lounging-chairs.

“What is the matter?” asked the mother.

“Well, if you must know, mother,” said Louise, the elder girl, after a moment’s pause, “if you must know, we have had a perfectly wretched game.”

“Yes, we have,” concurred Emily, the second daughter.

“I suppose,” commented the mother calmly, “that your side did not win.”

"We did not play together," responded Emily, with some spirit. "Besides, mother, I hope we have been too well brought up to get mad, just because our side did not win."

"I trust so," said her mother, with real pleasure in her voice; "but human nature is strong, and I do not expect you to be perfect. It is hard for even the best people to get beaten. I am glad that a mere defeat has not put you into this agitated condition. I should like to know what has excited you so much; but you may tell me or not, just as you think best."

This brought a tumultuous confession from both girls.

"Now, mother, this is an awful accusation to bring against anybody; but Mrs. Elwyn has been cheating again, — you know she has done it before, and we girls can't stand it, whether it is for us or against us. She wasn't quite in position; and she moved her ball, — just casually hit it with her foot, you know, when she thought no one would see her. Oh, she did it three or four times!"

Mrs. Elwyn was a woman whom they all liked. She was a member of the same church with themselves, and in most respects a conscientious woman; but she had repeatedly cheated in small ways upon the croquet-ground

and in playing in-door games. Her desire to win seemed to blind her to the moral significance of acts which she doubtless considered too trivial to have a moral quality ; but to Louise and Emily, who had been most carefully instructed, Mrs. Elwyn seemed, as she should have seemed to everybody, a shockingly dishonest woman. Her profession of religion, in which she was in most ways consistent, and her excellence as a housekeeper and a mother, were all neutralized to them by this blot upon her character.

One evening, not long ago, a lady, who had been playing logomachy with a family at whose table she had just dined, remarked naïvely, "What a delightful game we are having ! It is charming to play with people who don't cheat."

As she said this, the look of surprise which spontaneously appeared upon the countenances of her auditors seemed to call for an explanation.

"I mean," she added, "that nearly everybody does cheat in playing games. Don't you know that they do ?"

In a certain family, in which the greatest pains have always been taken to impress it upon the children that they must bear defeat bravely, and that the object of playing is not entirely to win, one of the five children, a

bright girl of twelve, cannot conceal her vexation if she is beaten. At first she merely looks sober. If the ill-luck continues, she grows cross and irritable. At last she bursts into tears, and rushes from the room.

From these illustrations, and from every one's experience, it is easy to see that a peculiar strain seems to be imposed upon the nervous system by the playing of games. This excitement is at the root of the evils of gambling, and of the prejudice which many excellent people still cherish against all games of chance.

In this age, however, everybody plays games. They are almost as much a part of American family life as eating breakfast or going to school; and as there is, in all departments, a best way to do everything, so there is a best way to do this, a way which should be taught and insisted upon in every well-regulated household. Who has not seen party after party broken up by the ill-bred child who refuses to be "it"? Who does not recognize at once and deplore the devices of the quick-witted youngster who finds a way in the game to put the disagreeable parts upon others, and to enjoy all the fun himself?

No opportunity should be neglected to ex-

plain to children that they must learn to enjoy games for the pleasure of playing them. They must exert themselves to the utmost for the good of their side ; but when fortune is against them, or the superior skill of their antagonists triumphs, it is not only rude in them, but the mark of a lamentable lack of nobility of character, to display dejection or resentment. They should know that the man who accepts defeat gracefully has learned an art far harder and more beautiful than even the difficult one of bearing victory gracefully.

If the desire to win is not suffered to become overmastering, there is far less temptation to children to cheat. Never allow the slightest liberty in this way, even when a child's little scheme may not be out-and-out cheating; and never laugh when a clever child devises some ingenious way, as he not infrequently will, to overreach another. Be merciless to all such peccadilloes, and they will eventually be stamped out. The child who cheats in a game, or who gets "mad," or refuses to bear his part when his turn comes, reveals a pitiable lack of home-training.

The game of croquet has been mentioned; and before venturing into wider fields, a few words should be said in regard to that good

old game. For those, young and old, who are not very strong, cannot walk far at a time, and yet wish for out-door diversion, there is nothing to compare with croquet. Children may be amused by it for hours together during the long vacation days, and without the weariness which attends other games. Tired mothers may really rest while enjoying it. Fewer quarrels are inspired by it than by most games. It is the ideal, quiet out-door game; and its cheapness places it within the reach of the poorest, if one have only a few rods of level ground whereon to set it up.

But all these pleasant things are true only when the game is played right.

So few people do play croquet right that it may be worth while to teach others how, if possible. The technical rules are of small account, compared with certain broad principles which should govern the conduct of the players, and certain adjuncts, which are worth all the strictly "professional" features.

In the first place, after getting your set, unless it is one of the most expensive, with enamelled wickets, wind all the arches, firmly and closely, with inch-wide strips of white cotton cloth. Fasten the ends well with needle and thread. Wickets thus covered will outwear

those dressed with several coats of paint, and are much whiter. They give the ground an attractively neat appearance, and are so plainly seen that they allow people with poor eyesight a fair chance in the game with the keener-eyed.

Secondly, have seats for all the players, conveniently near the central part of the ground, and allow no one to stand during the game, except the player of the moment, and, if necessary, the captain of his side. A six- or even an eight-ball game may be played during an afternoon, if the players will only sit down between their turns. If they do not sit down, even a four-ball game becomes exhausting before it is half through; and nervousness, wild shots, and general crossness ensue. The game may be seen quite as well from the seats as anywhere else, if they are properly placed, while the player has a much better chance to put in good work on a free field; but young people hate to sit down, and some severity has to be employed with them until the habit is formed.

Thirdly, have invariable and explicit rules, which shall guide the play on your ground, without special regard to the rules practised by your neighbors, so long as you have good professional authority. It is a good plan to

have these rules written or printed, and hung within easy reach of the players.

Fourthly, if more than four are playing, have a captain for each side, whose advice, while not necessarily decisive, shall be accorded more weight than that of any other player in his battalion.

Sometimes extraordinary differences of opinion will exist upon a croquet-ground regarding plain matters of fact. One says that a ball went through a wicket, or hit something; while another, whose eyesight is equally good, saw nothing of the kind. The natural appeal of hot-blooded children in such cases is to the immemorial fist; but they should be early instructed that arbitration is the only honorable and dignified method of settling such disputes. Thus a great principle will be illustrated and impressed upon them. In fact, the whole moral law and the whole history of civilization may be illustrated, one might say, in a good game of croquet.

But croquet occupies only a small portion of the public interest nowadays, compared with other sports. Before touching upon some of the more modern of these, a word should be said upon boating and swimming.

In spite of the great number of boys who

swim, there is still, strange to say, a not inconsiderable minority of mothers who are afraid to have their sons go near the water (as well as afraid to have them do anything else requiring the slightest risk). One of these mothers remarked lately, "I never would allow my boy to swim, and I never could bear to have him in a boat. Skating I always detested, and ball-playing I consider vulgar. He had a pony to ride, — a very gentle one, — and he was always allowed to walk as much as he chose."

Her hearers understood then why it was that this son had grown up to be a narrow-chested and delicate man. Fortunately he had possessed a strong love for the out-door world, as well as a fondness for books; and his walking, riding, and reading had kept him out of mischief, and had saved him from inanition. But an active, full-blooded boy, not decidedly studious, would have been ruined by such a bringing up.

There is no need to descant here upon the manifold attractions and uses of the art of swimming. All proper precautions for his safety should be taken, but your boy should learn to swim. Never let him go into the water unless he is well; neither let him go alone, nor with flighty boys only, even when he

has mastered the main elements of the art of natation. Cramps and accidents of all sorts are too common for that. Keep him away from whirlpools and rapids, and impress upon him, whenever occasion offers, by anecdote, precept, and example, the necessity of exercising prudence in the matter. Especially see that he is familiar with remedies for the cramp, and with the modes of reviving the apparently drowned. Many a valuable life has been lost because a boy's companions did not understand how to use proper restoratives when his body was first recovered from the water. Teach your boy the importance of staying in the water but a few minutes at a time, and of being very active during those few minutes. It is far better to go in several times, staying only ten or fifteen minutes at a time, than to go in once for an hour. Boys do go into even fresh water, which is rather more likely to be harmful than salt water, for two hours or more at a time, and live through it without apparent harm, but it is at a deadly risk. Twenty minutes in fresh water and half an hour in salt water are the farthest safe limits.

When your boy knows how to swim well, and not until then, allow him to go out alone in a row-boat. When he has mastered the simple

rules for rowing, paddling, and sculling, by all means let him learn the management of a sail-boat under some cautious and experienced skipper. It is good if his father or some near relative is able to adequately instruct and accompany him.

At five o'clock one morning, on a well-known beach, a heedless and undisciplined youth, who had been allowed to have a small yacht before he could swim a stroke, overturned his craft; and instead of clinging to it, as all boys should be taught to do when upset, he drifted about in the water helplessly, sinking twice before aid could reach him. The people in the twenty or thirty cottages which were clustered thickly upon this beach were aroused from their sleep by his piercing screams. Looking from their windows, most of them could see the foolish and headstrong fellow, whose lavish spending and loud boasts had made him a conspicuous figure in the little community, and their knowledge of his stupidity made them apprehensive that he would be drowned before aid could reach him. Although he did not appear to be more than a few boat-lengths from the shore, it seemed a life-time to the on-lookers before a lobsterman, who by chance was near at hand upon

the rocks, could push his boat off, and reach the helpless young fellow. Many of those who witnessed the thrilling spectacle of his rescue, after he had risen for the third and last time, were unable to recover from the strain for weeks.

All of them were taught one impressive lesson. It was to allow no one under their control to go out in a boat alone until he had learned to swim.

But perhaps there is one object which is even more fascinating to the average boy than a boat. It is a ball.

There are baseballs, tennis-balls, golf-balls, hand-balls, basket-balls, footballs, — and no one knows how many more varieties; but they are all beloved of boys. Perhaps the most popular of these is the baseball.

The mother of four boys, of ages ranging from ten to eighteen, was recently inveighing against the national game.

"I am so tired of it," she avowed, "that I wish I might never see a baseball again!"

"But," protested a friend, "your boys are so active that I should think baseball would afford a safe vent for their spirits."

"It might, only it goes too far. Why, every one of my four boys is entirely taken up with

it. As soon as they get out of school, it is, ho ! for the ball-ground ; and there they stay, only stopping for a hurried dinner, until it is too dark to see. The champion baseball players are greater men to them than George Washington. I am in constant fear lest all of them will aspire to be professional baseball players."

Her sanguine friend refused to share her fears, and insisted that her boys were probably better off with baseball than without it.

Still, every mother of such boys, and there are thousands of them, must admit that the "fascination of the diamond" has terrors for her. This is especially true where betting and carousing and Sunday games are connected with the sport. Every candid man and woman must admit the excellence of the game itself, which is not too intricate for popular comprehension, not especially dangerous to life or limb, and yet affords fine opportunity for athletic exercise. On the whole, it would seem to be the least objectionable of the hardy sports which has yet appeared. Every true American must rejoice that the tendencies to gambling and "buying-up" games and players, which twenty years ago threatened to ruin the game, have been so largely suppressed, and must regard with pleasure the generally ele-

vated stand taken by the professional players against dishonest methods in the management of their clubs.

Most of us, however, do not care to have our sons looking forward to a brilliant career on the ball-field as the loftiest aim of their existence. The best way in which to defeat this ambition is, perhaps, not to directly attack the thing itself. Other pursuits may be made so much more attractive that ball-playing may be shorn of its glory beside them. See that your boy's school and other occupations are made as interesting as possible, and that home and the home influence become stronger factors with him each day, and then the anxious parent may snap his fingers at all outside attractions.

A little story which illustrates several phases of this subject may not be inappropriate just here :

A boy of ten, whose constant cry had been for a bicycle for a Christmas present, came in from school one day in the early winter, and asked his mother if she had read any of Holmes's poems.

"Oh, yes," she replied. "I know several of them by heart."

"Do you?" he cried delightedly. "Well, aren't they nice? Our teacher has just been

having us read some. Have we got them in a book?"

"No," answered his mother. "I wish we had."

"I feel as if I must have them," continued the small boy earnestly. "Don't you suppose I could have them for Christmas? How much do they cost, anyhow? Much as a bicycle? Now, I tell you what. If they cost so much that I can't have them both, I believe I'd rather have Holmes's Poems than a bicycle."

"Indeed!" exclaimed his mother, much surprised and pleased; for this child had been a baseball enthusiast, with a very strong bent for sports of all sorts. Turning to the boy's father, she remarked hopefully, "Really, I don't know but we are going to have a poet in the family."

"Oh, no!" cried the boy quickly, as if fearful of raising expectations which might never be realized. "I'm going to be a baseball pitcher, you know, when I grow up; but I'll tell you what," he added suddenly, "I can't play baseball in the winter, and I might be a poet winters."

When a boys of ten gets to the point where he thinks he will play ball in the summers, but has poetical aspirations for the winters, his parents have no reason to despair of him for some years to come.

Indeed, most of the popular games to be played with balls are good. An exception must be made in the case of football. Here are a few facts which have come under the personal notice of the writer.

In a certain large preparatory school, five players upon "the eleven" are at this writing disabled. The engagements of the team are "hanging fire" until such a time as enough of these wounded heroes have recovered to guard all needed points. The commonest complaint among them is some form of injury to the knee. The captain of this same football team, drilling his "men" the other day, cried repeatedly to one player, whose play was too gentle to suit him, "Tackle to kill, I tell you, tackle to kill!"

A well-known surgeon in a large city, a college man, and thoroughly in sympathy with legitimate athletics, remarked in a private conversation lately, "If parents had any idea of the seriousness of the hurts in the hundreds of cases which have been brought to me from the football fields, they would forbid their sons to play the game. Many a hurt, which is regarded at first as trivial, has vital consequences. This is especially true of the injuries to the knee, which usually crop out from time to time for years, often laying men up for days

and weeks at a time, preventing them ever from taking long walks, or from hurrying to catch trains, and not infrequently causing permanent lameness. The internal effects of outwardly small abrasions and bruises are often severe, and no one can calculate what may come from the brain-shocks which occur. The game may have been all right once, but now it is more brutal than any bull-fight. The killing of a bull is surely not so stupefying to the moral nature of the spectators as the loss of a limb or an eye of a young man, and it is nowhere near as important to the world. No imaginary access of manliness or self-control derived from football can make up for its obvious and crying evils."

In a certain family, not far from Boston, the three young sons, aged respectively fourteen, twelve, and ten, have been permitted to play on the grounds of a neighbor, though it was impressed upon them that they must never expect to join any school team. Their parents did not fully approve of football, but they thought there could be no harm in allowing them to play in a quiet way on private grounds with the children of highly respectable people ; but when these boys came home the other day, one with badly impaired fingers, the second with a dislo-

cated shoulder, the third with a cut face, and all three covered with blood, their parents decided that the "sport," even in this amateur shape, was too much like butchery.

A lady went away from home two or three weeks ago, leaving her two sons with the injunction to be very, very careful when they should play football. The day after her departure, they came home, one with a badly cut and sprained wrist, and the other with a much beplastered face. In order that their mother should suspect nothing, they were patched up by the family doctor, so that they were able to attend church the next morning. The boys wrote to her with great cheerfulness: "We went to church this morning as usual," thinking thus to disarm suspicion. But they forgot the omnipresent daily paper, in which the mother had read on Sunday morning that her two sons had been carried off the football field, badly disabled. Her telegram crossed the carefully prepared letter.

It is absurd to fill our magazines and newspapers with directions for taking care of our little ones, useless for mothers to guard against even stubbed toes and bumped heads for many a year, and to worry themselves almost sick over their children's diet and clothing, if, when

they reach maturity, they are going to be set up to be pommelled and kicked brutally in a football field, with a large presumption in favor of temporary or permanent injury. If the pains which we take in their childhood are worth while, and in the interests of civilization, then the football is wrong ; if the latter is calculated to advance the progress of the race, then the former is wrong, and we should proceed by every sort of exposure and roughness to toughen them, careless whether or not the weaklings fall by the way. The survival of those fit for football would be enough.

"I have watched over my sons by night and day for twenty years," said one mother. "If their country needs them, or if there is a principle to be fought for, I will see them enter the front ranks and be shot down, and I will utter no protest ; but I will not see them knocked about, their limbs, their reason, their very life, imperilled, to make a Roman holiday for a throng of idle, half-frenzied spectators."

The exhilaration and excitement of a game of football are very great. They are what give it its present hold upon our people, many of whom plead to have the game continued a little longer, in the hope that its defects (which most thinking men acknowledge) may be reme-

died "from the inside." It was claimed not long ago that "the new rules" would insure the needed improvement. The facts above cited, and the testimony of many witnesses, indicate that the so-called game is no better now than when, hundreds of years ago, it was prohibited in many English towns on account of its roughness.

Every one rejoices in the present tendency toward out-door sports. Let us have athletics, and plenty of them; but let us reduce to a minimum the element of danger necessarily present in all forms of rapid, manly sport. In football it is at its maximum, which is far too large.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BOY'S LIBRARY.

IN an eloquent panegyric upon the imagination, Professor Charles Eliot Norton once insisted that no other mental quality is so desirable, no matter what may be a man's business or station in life. He even declared that the chief benefit to be derived from academies and colleges is the stimulus which they give to this wonderful faculty.

Now our boys, especially our city boys, must get food for their imagination principally from books. They must have books in convenient places. They must read them. Above all, they must love to read them.

Dr. Harry Hopkins has declared that all that a man could hope to permanently carry away with him from school or college is a taste for good literature. A president of Cornell University bore similar testimony in his inaugural address. The athlete forgets the precise exercises which he practised throughout toilsome

years, but the hard muscles which they produced stand by him. "If a man's academical training has not made him love good literature," said another distinguished man, "it may well be counted a failure."

Blessed be the taste for good reading! Next to religion, it is the rich man's boon and the poor man's solace. No matter what perplexities and sorrows are upon us, if we can steal apart for an hour and lay hands upon a good book, we may be wafted upon the wings of genius far away from sordid realities into a realm so different that, when we return to life again, we may have all the sense of refreshment which is afforded by a trip to delightful foreign countries, in congenial companionship.

In the line of home education for the young, there is probably only one thing which is worse than too little care for their reading, and that is too much. Many famous men have testified that they were let loose in extensive libraries during their early years, and browsed among the books wherever they liked. This, as the poet intimates, is apt to be dangerous. Nobody will ever know, though one may hear of many who have been benefited by such a course, how many gallant young souls have been ruined by it. Still, Mrs. Browning goes on to say that

"The world of books is still the world,
And both worlds have God's providence, thank God!"

On the other hand, any honest boy is prone to dislike what is constantly forced upon him as something which he ought to like. A certain young man confessed that he was early led to hate "Robinson Crusoe," because it was so persistently prescribed for him.

"When I think," he said, "of what I lost by refusing to look into that book in my childhood, I could find it in my heart to punish the well-meaning friends who so injudiciously teased me to read it."

One little boy, whose devotion to out-door pursuits left him scant time for reading, had an invariable reply when reproached with his ignorance.

"I've read 'Grimm's Fairy Tales' forty times," he would say, "and 'Little Women' and 'Pilgrim's Progress' almost as much, and 'Men of Iron,' and that's enough. The books you say I ought to read I don't believe I should like at all."

"But you wouldn't have liked 'Grimm's Fairy Tales,' and the others, if you never had read them," his mother would suggest.

"But now I have read them," maintained the little boy stoutly; "and when I have time to

read, I just want to read them over again. I might waste a whole hour trying to read one of those books you talk about, and then I mightn't like it at all. My old books are good enough for me, and I don't believe I shall ever want to read any others."

It is a fact that for several years of his life this boy read the four books mentioned, over and over, to the exclusion of all others, excepting bound volumes of *Harper's Young People*, or *Round Table*, *St. Nicholas*, *The Youth's Companion*, and the now departed *Wide Awake*, of all of which he was fond, and which were of great benefit to him. Some wise judges think that this little boy's idea of knowing a few books thoroughly, rather than a large number superficially, is not a bad one. His special quartette may not be the very best that could be selected, but it is a good one.

A certain class of boys are inclined to affectation. They soon learn that they are considered virtuous if they read particular books. They, therefore, make it a point to be seen poring over these books, just for the sake of praise, — which is probably worse for character than never reading at all.

One of Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett's characters is made to say, "The *mejumer* you are

with children, the better." It sometimes seems that every article concerning the training of the young should begin with this quotation. A wise "letting alone" in the matter of a boy's reading should be "mejumed" (to coin a verb from the adjective) with a careful selection of the books among which he may wander; but they should usually be simply left in his way, mentioned perhaps, but seldom forced upon him.

Mothers of boys are constantly besieging each other with such questions as these: "What do you give your boys to read?" "Please tell me the names of some good books for boys. I always give my boys books for their Christmas presents." "My boy cares nothing for history. What should he read in order that he may acquire a taste for it?" "My boy is all for practical work and business. This is right, so far as it goes; but how can I instill into him in addition a love for letters and a livelier imagination?" "My boy cares nothing for any sort of stories, except those of hairbreadth escapes and the most improbable and highly spiced adventures. What can he read which will give him a more healthy taste, and yet hold his interest?"

It will be remembered that Walter Scott deprecated the special preparation of works for the

young. He considered the temptation to "write down" too great to allow authors to make books for children of as strong and good a quality as they would prepare if they were writing for adults. The weak nature of much of the modern "literature" for children bears out this theory. There is nothing, after all, quite so nourishing as the old, old books. A series of articles was not many years ago published in the *Forum*, on "Books Which Have Helped Me." Many of the most distinguished men and women in Europe and America contributed to this series, and inquiring minds will find it interesting and instructive.

There are so many excellent books for children in the lines of history, biography, travel, adventure, and fiction that no one person can possibly be familiar with all of them, without giving up most of a lifetime to their study. It is a fairly safe rule to presume that certain publishing houses would not allow their imprint upon a poor or a harmful book; and still, unless one is advised by a friend in whom one has confidence, it is wisest to examine a new book oneself before putting it into the hands of a child. One well-known work by a charming author has been confidently placed upon the shelves of thousands of juvenile libraries

in this country; and yet this work contains one chapter which is, to put it mildly, utterly unsuited for children's reading. Know what you are doing before you present a book to a child. It may be his making or his marring.

In talking of reading for boys, it is taken for granted that the boys for whom reading is desired are schoolboys, studying, during nine months of each year, several hours each day. All mental work and no mental play will not do. The sordid, phlegmatic type of man, which our critics say is the prevailing one in America just now, may be the outcome of a barren study of text-books alone; a study which often leaves undeveloped the higher qualities of the mind. Hard play follows school-hours. Night comes, with perhaps some lounging, some study, and a good deal of yawning through the evening. Then the boy goes to bed. The next morning the school grind begins again, the same routine follows, and, from simple lack of use, the loveliest part of the boy's mind, as Professor Norton calls it, may never be unfolded. It is as though beautiful buds were never allowed to open, because they were kept away from the sun-rays.

"But," you say, "what if the child won't read?"

Then put him where he cannot help hearing reading. In every household where there are growing children, there should be reading aloud daily from some good book. If the books for such reading are judiciously chosen, a boy cannot help liking them any more than he can help liking ripe plums and peaches.

It is surprising to find, however, how little of this sort of reading is done, even among cultivated people. In one family, the father happens to "dislike it." He wants to look at the paper, and he "cannot have a noise." Therefore the children are hushed, the mother sits meekly and sews, and nobody dares to speak. In another home, the father's voice is not adapted to elocution, and neither is the mother's. They are made "nervous" by the children's stumbling attempts at it. In a third home, it is impossible to agree upon a book.

These are specimens of the innumerable reasons given against reading aloud in certain families. Yet all households in which it has been thoroughly tried, testify to its charm and its benefit. It is not only a pleasant way of passing the time, and acquiring information and culture,—for genuine culture is gained chiefly by reading,—but it brings in a new

common interest of a high order, and affords a topic for elevated conversation in the family, — something too often lacking.

In a household thus carefully accustomed to good literature, bad or worthless books will not be tolerated by any member, just as a child used to good food will loathe that which is ill-cooked and unsavory. The penny dreadful and its ilk, which lie ever in wait for our boys, as the iceberg for the unconscious vessel, —

“Swimming full upon the ship it founders,
Hungry, with huge teeth of splintered crystal,”

cannot harm the child brought up to know and love the best.

“I picked up a queer book at Frank’s house the other day,” remarked a bright boy to his mother. “It was about a little fellow not so old as I am. He went through all sorts of impossible adventures with no money, but always something turning up whenever there was a crisis, so that he never starved, nor was sick, nor anything of that sort. In the end, he found a rich man’s pocket-book, and the rich man sent him to school and college. I asked Frank if he thought it ever could have happened, and he said he didn’t know why not. He said I didn’t know a good story when I

saw it. Now, I suppose that is what you call 'a cheap, sensational story,' isn't it?"

That boy had evidently mastered one foundation principle of literary criticism.

The wife of a noted literary man once remarked: "We are at our wits' ends continually to get books suitable to read aloud in our very mixed family circle. There is E., who is nine; H., is twelve; Cousin L., is eighteen; and there are grandfather and grandmother. We all love to gather around the evening lamp for a half-hour or so before the regular evening occupations begin, and enjoy a good book which one reads aloud; but books which please the elders sometimes contain rather strong meat for the youngsters, and conversely."

Among books which this family found available for its purposes may be mentioned, "Ramona," "Cranford," many of the stories of Miss Wilkins and Miss Jewett, "Alice in Wonderland," Saintine's exquisite little story of "Picciola," Mark Twain's beautiful "The Prince and the Pauper," Mrs. Dodge's "Hans Brinker," Mr. Harris's "Uncle Remus," Stockton's "Rudder Grange" and "Squirrel Inn," Mrs. Olive Thorne Miller's "Little Brothers of the Air," Kingsley's "Westward Ho!" and Maud Wilder Goodwin's "White Aprons." They also read

many of Dickens's, Scott's, Cooper's, and Thackeray's novels. It was the custom of the mother, who usually did the reading, to go beforehand through the book to be read, and carefully to note for omission parts which would sound indelicate when read aloud, or which were unduly disagreeable. If this is only done by a person of taste, there is hardly any great work which may not be rendered delightful for reading aloud in the family circle. For silent reading, there is nothing in the vigorous and manly writings of the four novelists above named which should be shut away from well-regulated young people.

Among books of travel, which should be in every family library, are the following: "The Land of the Midnight Sun," and "The Land of the White Elephant," Hezekiah Butterworth's "Zig-Zag Journeys," Horace E. Scudder's "Bodley Books," the Hales' "Family Flights," Agassiz's "Journey in Brazil," Miss Scidmore's "Jinrikisha Days," Darwin's "Trip Around the World in the Ship Beagle," Hornaday's "Two Years in a Jungle," Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast," Robert A. Keeley's "Arctic Seas," Livingstone's "Voyage up the Zambesi," Colonel Knox's "Our Boys" series, Frank Stockton's "Personally Conducted," the Rollo books,

Lady Brassey's "Around the World in the Yacht Sunshine," and "Across Asia on a Bicycle," by Allen and Sachtleben.

Even very small boys can appreciate portions, perhaps large ones, of most of the following books of history : Coffin's "Boys of '76" and "Boys of '61," Sidney Lanier's "Boys' Froisart," and "Boys' King Arthur," Edna Lyall's "In the Golden Days," Fiske's "War of Independence" and "Discovery of America," Henrietta Christian Wright's "Stories of American Progress," and of "American History," Harrison's "Stories of the Nations," Lord's "Beacon Lights of History," Parkman's "Pioneers of France in the New World," Charles Dickens's "Child's History of England," "English History for Americans" by Channing and Higginson, Gray's "Crusade of the Children," Rossiter Johnson's "Short History of the War of the Secession," Motley's, Irving's, and Prescott's books, Thayer's "Dawn of Italian Independence," and Tuttle's "History of Prussia."

In biography the list is even longer, and it is very rich. Mrs. Sarah K. Bolton has prepared three or four books, such as "Boys Who Became Famous," which are all good ; and there are Noah Brooks's "Life of Abraham Lincoln," Hughes's "Alfred the Great," Mrs. Gaskell's

"Life of Charlotte Brontë," and also Mr. Shorter's, "Biography of William Lloyd Garrison" by his sons, Mrs. Oliphant's "Makers of Florence," Higginson's "Memoirs of Margaret Fuller Ossoli," Mrs. Goodwin's "Dolly Madison," Grant's Autobiography, Lounsbury's "Life of Cooper," and many others.

The stories are innumerable. For the very little boys, whose sisters will like the same things (as is true throughout life far more than the conservative ones among us may think), are: the Prudy and Flaxie Frizzle Stories by Sophie May, "Susy's Six Birthdays," "The Brownie Books," "Little Miss Weezy," by Penn Shirley, "Little Lord Fauntleroy" and "Editha's Burglar" by Mrs. Burnett, Hawthorne's "Wonder Book" and "Tanglewood Tales," Mrs. Ewing's stories, Susan Coolidge's "Katy Did" series and "Guernsey Lily," Jane Anderson's "Seven Little Sisters," "Stories from Homer" by Church, and "Stories from English History" by Creighton, Bayard Taylor's "Boys of Other Countries," Mrs. Miller's "Little Folks in Feathers and Fur," George Macdonald's "At the Back of the North Wind," Jean Ingelow's "Mopsa the Fairy," Helen Dawes Brown's "Little Miss Phebe Gay," Charles Foster's "Story of the Bible," Joanna Spyri's "Heidi,"

Mattie Banks's "Richard and Robin," Lieutenant Schwatka's "Children of the Cold," Margaret Sidney's "Five Little Peppers," and Eliza Orne White's "When Molly was Six."

Older children will probably enjoy all these, and will appreciate even more some of the following: Warner's "A-Hunting of the Deer" and "Being a Boy," Mrs. Craik's "Adventures of a Brownie," Mademoiselle de la Ramée's "Bimbi" and "Dog of Flanders," Madame Cottin's "Exiles of Siberia," Blackmore's "Lorna Doone," Eliot's "Six Stories from the Arabian Nights," the Tom Brown books, Juliet B. Smith's "One Little Rebel," "Paul and Virginia," Aldrich's "Story of a Bad Boy" (and "Marjorie Daw," with its companion stories, is not too old for children of twelve or thereabout), Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather," Kingsley's "Water-Babies," "The Young Marooners," "The Swiss Family Robinson," "Esperanza, or the Home of the Wanderers" (a Story of South America, very old), and the Mayne Reid and Henty books. Then there are Miss Wilkins's "Pot of Gold" and "Young Lucretia," Mrs. Wiggin's books, Mr. Mabie's "Norse Stories," the "Franconia" series and others, by Jacob Abbott, Jean Ingelow's "Stories Told to a Child," "Gulliver's Travels," Mrs. Prentiss's

"Stepping Heavenward," Mrs. Moore's "Ryle's Open Gate," Mrs. Richards's "Captain January," "Melody," and "When I was Your Age," all of Miss Alcott's stories, "The Pilots of Pomona" by Robert Leighton, "Shreds and Patches" by E. N. Leigh-Fry, Mrs. Jane G. Austin's "Historical Tales," Mrs. Barr's "Bow of Orange Ribbon," and "Bernicia," Miss Yonge's "Book of Golden Deeds," "Kenneth," "Heir of Redclyffe" and "Dove in the Eagle's Nest," "Following the Flag" and "Building the Nation" by C. C. Coffin, Charles Wagner's "Youth," Kirk Munroe's "Flamingo Feather," "Snow-Shoes and Sledges," and "Mates" series; "We Girls" and "Faith Gartney's Girlhood," by Mrs. Whitney, "Ben Hur," Lucy Larcom's "A New England Girlhood," Mrs. Craik's "John Halifax," Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare," Munger's "On the Threshold," Kipling's "Jungle Book," Lucy C. Lillie's "Stories of Music and Musicians," "Donald Marcy" by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, E. E. Hale's "In His Name" and "Ten Times One," Irving's "Sketch Book" and "Tales of a Traveller," "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and "Oldtown Folks," Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward," all of Miss Jewett's stories, Mrs. Earle's "Sabbath in Puritan New England" and other

similar books, and Theodore Roosevelt's "Winning of the West."

Delightful books of science for the young are now very numerous. A few that may be mentioned are: Julia P. Ballard's "Among the Moths and Butterflies," Mabel Loomis Todd's "Eclipses of the Sun," Frank Bolles's "Land of the Lingering Snow," John Burroughs's "Locusts and Wild Honey," John Muir's "Mountains of California," Fanny D. Bergen's "Glimpses at the Plant World," Thomas Nuttall's "Handbook of Ornithology," Mary Treat's, Dr. C. C. Abbott's, and Bradford Torrey's books; Mrs. Creevey's "Recreations in Botany" and "Flowers of Hill, Field, and Swamp," Thoreau's "Walden Pond," and the treatises of Sir John Lubbock. In art books may be mentioned Ruskin's "Ethics of the Dust," and Mrs. Lucy M. Mitchell's "History of Sculpture."

It goes without saying that all well-regulated families should be familiar with the great Shakespearean plays, so that a mention of "Shylock," "Juliet's Nurse," "Ariel," "Lady Macbeth," "Cordelia," "Hermione," "Bottom the Weaver," and the scores of other equally important characters in them, should be immediately recognized. The principal poems of Scott,

Tennyson, Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Bryant, Holmes, Emerson, Poe, and even Browning, should be household words everywhere. "How they brought the Good News," "The Pied Piper," "An Incident of the French Camp," "Hervé Riel," and others, are loved by boys. The fine parts of "Childe Harold" make everybody better for reading them. Excellent compendiums of poetry are Helen Kendrick Johnson's "Poems of Love and Childhood," Mr. W. P. Garrison's "Bedside Poetry," Mrs. Bellamy's and Mrs. Goodwin's "Open Sesame," Palgrave's "Golden Treasury of Lyrics," and Dana's "Household Book of Poetry." Good translations of the Iliad, Odyssey, and Dante should be always at hand, and extracts read from them as frequently as possible. Often these extracts may be chosen to illustrate novels which are being read. Thus the Iliad and Scott go together wonderfully. Read often "The Ancient Mariner" (unless it makes your children nervous), "Baby Bell" and others by Aldrich, Macaulay's "Lays of Ancient Rome," Montgomery's "Heroic Ballads," Whittier's "Child-Life in Poetry," and passages from Milton, whose lofty lines fascinate some children.

Be sure that every day you read a portion of the Bible with your children. Do not be afraid

to begin at the beginning. Look ahead from day to day ; note such expressions as our modern taste condemns ; say, "We will skip these next verses or chapters. They are disagreeable," or "We shall lose nothing important by letting these go, and we shall get sooner to the story of Balak, or Korah, or sooner to this fine song of Miriam." The children will learn to enjoy with you those rare, vivid old histories, or those grand psalms, as they never can any other book. Be interested in them yourself, talk out your interest, and the children, you will find, will outrun you. At the end of a chapter, you will sometimes say, "Boys, it seems too long to wait until to-morrow to finish this story. Let's have another chapter now ;" or, "Isn't that the sweetest poem you ever heard? Come, Henry, read it again ;" or "That is the kind of advice to really help us all. Let us remember it when we are tempted to-day." A love for the Bible means everything that is grand and noble for a man. A boy who does not love his Bible has had something wrong with his home-training. Be sure that every one of your children has a Bible of his own, printed in that clear type which is a perpetual invitation to him to read it.

Certain immortal passages should be learned

by heart by every child. A great and good woman has begged that the committing of such extracts should not be made compulsory, and should never be made a penalty. But, however it is done, every boy before he is fifteen should know the first, nineteenth, twenty-third, twenty-fourth, forty-second, ninety-first, and one hundred and twenty-first Psalms (and a dozen others); "Barbara Frietchie," "Marco Bozzaris," Wordsworth's lines beginning "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting," Milton's "Sonnet on His Blindness," Polonius's advice to Laertes, and many other passages from Shakespeare, Burns's "Bannockburn," Scott's "Pibroch of Donald Dhu," Campbell's "Hohenlinden," and many others. The *New York Independent* rendered a valuable service in printing each week, for many months, a classic poem, on purpose for home uses of this sort. In nearly every family a good poem, long or short, can and should be read aloud every day of every year. A love of all that is good and grand, familiarity with the best words in the language, correct ideals, generosity, reverence, — these are only a few of the results which must flow from such reading. Matthew Arnold attributes the highest educational power to poetry. Old George Herbert says,

"A verse will find him whom a sermon flies."

It is most interesting to see how particular pieces take hard hold upon particular boys. Great tact is sometimes required to give each one a chance to hear his own especial favorites often enough. Then watch and see how at certain lines the same suspicious little snuffing occurs; or the same light dawns night after night on the rapt young faces; or the same ripple of laughter runs along; or the same deep sigh testifies to the strain relieved by the close of some heroic episode, — like the exploit of Horatius or the death of Constance.

At the close of "Romeo and Juliet," which the mother had been reading aloud, the children in a certain family went to bed in profound gloom and silence. The youngest, a boy of nine, went up the stairs last, halting more and more at every step. At last the mother heard him stop entirely.

"What is it, darling?" she said. "Do you feel bad?"

The child could bear his woe no longer. He broke out into uncontrollable sobs.

"Oh, I didn't want 'em to die! I didn't want 'em to die!" he moaned. "Why didn't he fix it some other way! Oh, I can't bear to have 'em die!"

"I'll tell you how I often imagine it," responded his mother soothingly. "I make believe that, at the very last, Juliet rose up just in time to show Romeo that she was all right; and then, of course, he did not drink the poison, — and then they got married, and lived happily ever after."

The boy brightened up immediately. He thought this a great improvement upon the original. He suggested only the addition that the happy couple should be blessed with a family of "nice little boys" (which always seemed to round out his idea of perfect bliss); and having thus stripped the immortal tragedy of its romance, and levelled it to a modern, bread-and-butter, domestic tale, he wiped his eyes, said his little prayers, and went to bed.

CHAPTER IX

THE BOY'S EVENINGS.

THE evening is the period of impressions. The stress and clamor of the day are over. Relaxed and receptive, the soul listens in leisure for whatever the breezes may bring. The words and pictures which float by are absorbed into the tissues of the being, and influence it forever. Some one has said, paraphrasing the famous remark of Fletcher of Saltoun, "I care not how a young man spends his days. Let wisdom but direct his evenings, and his future is assured."

In the home, then, let us well consider the evening. Fathers and mothers should use their best efforts to make it the pleasantest and most profitable time of the day. In one happy home all of the family take part in some game, or in several, for a half-hour, more or less, after the evening meal. Then a half-hour or so is passed in reading aloud. Then those who must study or work retire to the proper rooms, while

the very young children go to bed. The mother picks up her sewing or her knitting or her reading, the father resorts to his book or paper, while the older sons and daughters cluster around the piano, go forth to meet social engagements, or unite with their parents in conversation, special reading, or the entertainment of guests. All derive both pleasure and profit from their evenings.

"I do not allow my children in the room when we have visitors," a mother remarked recently. "I do not believe in having children listen when older people are talking."

An instructive contrast to this sentiment was afforded by the testimony of a lady who participated in a discussion which was held not long ago in a small literary club.

"I count among the most potent and beneficial influences of my early life," said the speaker, a refined and highly cultured woman, "the guests who came to my father's house. When a special matter of business was to be canvassed, I was sometimes sent from the room. Otherwise I was allowed to remain, a silent but appreciative sharer in the social pleasure of the occasion. What clever comments I used to hear upon books and upon affairs! I can remember noticing how deftly my mother would

turn the conversation when it began to grow too closely personal, and how absolutely, yet how unobtrusively, she insisted upon the exclusion of petty neighborhood gossip, which she hated. My ideal of conversation has always been that which I used to hear in my father's house. It has made me, I trust, no less charitable to those who find few subjects for discussion beyond their own ailments, their domestic embarrassments, and the failings of their friends, but I have refused to select such people for my intimate companions. I must have the friends who frequent my home those who can be to my children what the friends of my father and mother were to me, or else I can have none at all."

"Be choice in your friendships," says Emerson. "You can have but few, and the number will dwindle as you grow older."

"An hour's conversation with a wise man," says a Chinese proverb, "is worth a year's mere study of books."

"I should have to go without society altogether," exclaimed one lively woman to whom these remarks were reported, "if I should place my standards so high as yours, in the little town where I live."

Such a woman has a mission in attempting to

build up the tone of the thought in that little town. If the tone of the thought is low, so will be the tone of the talk. Libraries, improvement societies, churches, — all things that stimulate thought beyond eating and drinking and dressing, — must be helped and made to grow.

Conversation which is bad for our children is bad for us. If the tone of the thought of those who come to your house is habitually and chronically low and meagre, it will be wise to discourage their coming. Let us not be contented with companions whose ordinary talk we do not like to have our children hear.

Then when our friends drop in of an evening, the children will often be delighted and profited by listening to the conversation. But in such cases they cannot usually take much part in it themselves. It is wise to seize the long winter evenings, whenever it can be done, for quiet talks with the children.

In a certain family in which are two boys and two girls, of ages ranging from eight to eighteen, the father and mother seldom speak to the children on any other subjects than those pertaining to the immediate affair of the moment, — their clothes, their manners on a given occasion, or their standing in school.

“As for sitting down and conversing with

those children, bright and intelligent as they are, I don't believe Mr. and Mrs. O. ever think of doing it," said an observer. "Yet they are church-members, and intend to bring up their family just right."

How many such families are there among us?

Let parents seize their opportunities. Talk with your children. Do not confine your remarks to them to such statements as that their toes turn in, and they grow more clumsy every day, and you wish that boy ever could stir without tearing a three-cornered rent in his trousers.

For example, Dick comes in. It is early December. He had to hurry over to the church immediately after dinner to rehearse some tableaux which are to be given on Christmas night. The father has had to go forth to attend a political meeting. The other children have all gone to bed or are busy. It is just striking nine o'clock. The boy yawns, and throws himself down.

"How did the rehearsal go, Dick?"

"Pretty well. But you ought to see that Thompson girl. She doesn't know anything. She is going to be in the crowd behind the Sir Galahad, and she asks the most absurd

questions. She never heard of Tennyson, and she never heard of Lowell; only she knows there is a town called Lowell, where her cousin used to work in a mill. Oh, she is stupider than stupid!"

"O Dick! don't say such hard things about people. If you knew that poor Thompson girl's parents, you wouldn't wonder she doesn't know much. She hasn't had any chance. I fear you would be quite as stupid as she if you had been in the same circumstances."

"Well, I hope I should know enough to hold my tongue, and not try to tell all creation what I don't know."

The mother cannot help a little laugh.

"Yes, silence is golden just about nine-tenths of the time. But go on and tell me about the rehearsal."

"Oh! we all stood up there; and I have a helmet on, and a big sword; and I have to hold my head up, and try to look as 'noble' as I can, which is mighty hard work, I tell you; but the poem is pretty, and Dr. Sims stands just behind the scenes, and reads it just splendidly. He read it all through to-night, and we have to stand perfectly still while he reads it."

"Oh, I wish I might hear it!" sighs the mother. "I haven't read it for months. You

will have time to read it before half-past nine. Do read it to me."

The boy gets the book; and his young voice rings as he repeats the words, —

"My good blade carves the casques of men,
My tough lance thrusteth sure,
My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure."

He enjoys it twice as well as when he heard it over in the church, because you are enjoying it with him. When he rises to go to bed, you are a little nearer together than you have ever been before, because you have had this little talk together, fragmentary and imperfect as it has been.

"Did you ever think, dear," you ask him, as he bends over to kiss you good-night, "what it is that gives that wonderful charm to poetry?"

"Oh, I suppose it's the rhyme and the jingle!"

"Oh, no! just think of the soap and tooth-powder advertisements. No one would think of calling them poetry, though they often rhyme very prettily."

"Sure enough. I never thought of that. I'm sure I can't say what the difference is,

though of course I see there is a difference. How would you explain it?"

"Oh, my dear! I can't say. I suppose it is too deep for anybody to express, — that delicate, wild ecstasy, or that depth of feeling, which alone makes real poetry. If you ever get any light on the subject, I hope you will inform me."

"Oh, my!" the fourteen-year-old boy exclaims with a merry laugh, "it is likely I shall get any, if you and papa haven't any!"

"You can laugh, my son," the mother smiles up to him; "but that is just what your father and I are looking forward to. We expect that you children will accomplish far greater things than we have ever done. That is why we are trying to give you a better education, and to have you constantly learning better ways of doing things. Don't you see?"

"I'm afraid you'll be disappointed;" but the boy laughs, and kisses her tenderly. It is a new idea to him that he should ever look forward to being wiser than his father and mother. Very likely he may have had several new ideas while you have been talking. We can never get at the inner selves of our children without having long, quiet talks with them. By the way, long walks and drives af-

ford the very best opportunities for such communion.

But the children cannot be contented with simply the society of the home circle. The normal and healthful condition exists when there is a patriarchal family of boys and girls, and the school friends of all go back and forth between each other's houses, playing what are called "round games," pulling candy, hanging May-baskets, and studying lessons together under the wise supervision, and with the constant participation, of the older members of the family. It is in these sad new days of forlorn families of one or two spindling, idolized, spoiled darlings that the complications have arisen which make it necessary to take special measures for securing just the right kind and amount of social pleasure for children.

The doors of the hospitable Christian home stand open ever; and the guests who enter in, often angels unaware, accustom the children of the household to outsiders, and give them new views of life. But the neighborhood children should also be made welcome, when they are well-bred and congenial. Make often for your children simple parties, — logomachy-parties, candy-parties, music- or dancing-parties, card-parties, — inviting in, perhaps, no more than

four or five children at a time, and giving them the plainest, but always the daintiest, sort of refreshments. Have these in the daytime, so far as possible. If not, have them in the early evening. Children under twelve or fourteen, and even older, should be regularly in bed before nine, or at latest ten o'clock. Let the father and mother and the older brothers and sisters enter into these sports also, as far as possible. You may think that you have no time for such frivolities, but in after-life you may look back and see that you might better have afforded to slight almost anything else than these seeming trifles.

A young girl belonging to a refined and wealthy family recently eloped with her father's coachman. Such incidents are not uncommon. It is not uncommon either for young men to marry the waiting-maids in the restaurants where they eat luncheon, or the shop-girls who serve them with collars and neckties. In the case of the young lady who ran away with the coachman, a wise matron said, "It is not to be wondered at. Her parents have been so fearful that the poor girl would fall in love with somebody, that they scarcely ever allowed her to see or speak with a young man. Her elopement is only the legitimate result of her isolation."

Another young girl, with a beautiful face, good mind, and luxurious home, and with many social advantages possible to her if her parents would only allow them, is in what the family physician calls "a decline." One sensible friend of the family declares that the girl has simply what may be called "inanition." Her father and mother have guarded her from all general society as though it were some sort of a poison. She travels in private cars and closed carriages. She is taken yachting with her parents and perhaps a companion or two of her own age and sex. She is permitted occasionally to attend lawn-parties and luncheon-parties of young women; but she is kept away from even the best young men, as though the poor, innocent young fellows were some deadly sort of plague.

It is not to be denied that many coachmen and waiting-maids are superior to some of the denizens of Murray Hill and Beacon Street. Nevertheless, one does not wish to have one's daughters and sons marry respectively into these two classes of society until they have had ample opportunity to compare them with other young persons, and are satisfied that coachmen and waiting-maids are just what they want.

As the Creator has ordained that families should be composed of boys and girls, and men and women, and as the work of the world is getting to be more and more done by the united efforts of men and women, it would seem that, from the very first, our boys and girls should play together without self-consciousness, work together, be thoroughly at home in each other's society, appreciate each other's merits, and realize each other's faults. In no other way will they be able, when the decisive moments of their lives come, to choose wisely companions for life. Young people brought up properly are not half so likely to be duped by a pretty face or an engaging manner, as those who have been shut away from the society of their mates.

For instance, you wish to impress upon your children the value of health. They come running in from school, and find that you have what is called "a stiff neck," a not serious but often a very painful malady.

"Poor mamma!" they say, as they cluster around you, kissing your cheeks, and stroking your hair.

"No, boys," you declare boldly, "you shouldn't pity me. I was careless last night at Mrs. Green's *musical*. I sat by an open

window; and I felt afraid that I was catching cold, but did not like to move lest I should disturb some one. It was very careless, and I am only paying a righteous penalty. I deserve scolding more than pity. People have no right to be so careless. Poor papa came home early in order to do some special work; but, instead, he has had to run up and down-stairs to wait upon me; he has had to go to the drug-store to get medicines; and he has had to fill the hot-water bottle. Instead of having somebody to attend to his dinner, and make things pleasant for him, he is worried; and the maid will not be careful about putting on the dinner, and you must all talk as merrily as you can during the meal, because it is always dreary if the mother isn't there to see to everything. Sick mammas, if they get sick through carelessness,—and they generally do,—are very naughty, and make lots of trouble. It is a dreadful thing for a man to have an invalid for a wife, boys."

Or you invite Mr. and Mrs. Brown to dinner. Mrs. Brown is a weak and nervous woman, and spends fully half her time in bed. At the last moment she telegraphs that she is too ill to come, and Mr. Brown will not leave her side,—which is entirely proper, of course.

You say, "Poor Mr. Brown! What a mis-

fortune it is to be ill so much as Mrs. Brown is! Instead of coming and pleasantly eating dinner with us, Mr. Brown will be hushing everybody in the house, in order that Mrs. Brown shall not be disturbed. He will be running for the aromatic vinegar and hot cloths. He and the nurse will have to take turns probably in waiting on her during the night. He loves Mrs. Brown dearly, and he is used to waiting on her, and doubtless considers it a privilege; but, at the best, it is a great trial to have an invalid wife."

Your eldest boy, if he be from ten to fifteen years old, will very likely ask, "What made Mr. Brown marry such a sickly lady, mamma?" You respond, "Oh, young men do not usually stop to think of such matters as that, dear! They like a pretty face and figure; and if those are all right, they do not stop to ask whether or not the girl who has them is subject to dreadful headaches or fevers, or has backaches and feels tired all the time. They ought to, but they don't." The boy is set a-thinking.

In a certain family of boys the idea obtains, from what they have heard their mother say, that corsets are a fruitful source of invalidism and weakness among women; and they are accordingly very suspicious of any girl who has

a very slender waist. The chances are that such a boy may never find a girl to marry who does not wear corsets, but he will at least be anxious to free her from the torments afterward; and if she is the right sort of a girl, she will be glad to do anything to promote her health, and the health of her children, even if her waist is less "tidy" than before.

Teach your children to beware of the slangy and irreverent girl. If girls habitually quote Scripture lightly, if they speak disrespectfully of and to their parents or grandparents, they are to be distrusted. All lively boys and girls will sometimes in the exuberance of their spirits let fall careless words, but this is very different from characteristic and common irreverence.

Your boy says, "Nellie Tompkins's mother called her to-day. I said, 'Nellie, your mother wants you;' and what do you think she said?"

"I can't imagine."

"She said," lowering his voice to a whisper, "'I don't care a darn if she does.'"

You look properly shocked.

"What kind of a girl do you think that is?" demands this young Daniel come to judgment,—in this case a boy of ten.

You try to apologize for the girl. "Oh, she was excited! I wouldn't lay it up against her.

Perhaps she never said it before, and never will say it again."

"Oh, she says it often! And she says worse things than that. The other day I heard her tell her mother, 'I won't,' and 'You lie.'"

"In that case, I think I should keep as far away from Miss Nellie Tompkins as I could. She must be a very disagreeable young person to have anything to do with."

The boy has been taught a valuable lesson. Miss Nellie, at eighteen, will have learned to confine her impudence and profanity to the family circle; but the manner which she has acquired, and the indescribable flavor which will pervade her behavior, will furnish a standard for the boy so long as he lives. If a girl has that impertinent look in the corner of her eye, or that assumed propriety which is always transparent to the trained observer, the boy will at once relegate the girl to Miss Nellie's corner of his brain. Her lack of the crowning virtues of modesty and refinement will be revealed to him, even if she tries hard to cover up the deficiency, because he has known somebody very much like her, who, when off her guard, showed no modesty nor refinement.

Teach your boy the importance of a well-trained mind in a girl, as well as in a boy.

A woman who can reason is never hopeless. A sick, or a half-sick, woman is in no condition to reason. That is one of the causes why an invalid is often so hard to get along with, in spite of the fact that some invalids are among our sweetest characters.

But the vital trait, in either a boy or girl companion, is high religious principle. So far as possible, select for your children's companions those who have been brought up in homes where the Bible and prayer have formed the key-note of the family life.

If our boys and girls are early taught the essential nature of health, of intellectual culture and sweet reasonableness, and of high religious principle in their associates, and are given companions who share their ideals, there will be little danger that they will select partners for life from the outwardly fair but inwardly rude and uncultured. Thousands of well-meaning parents have erred in this matter of providing society for their children, and through this neglect they have later received the death-blow to their happiness.

CHAPTER X.

THE SOCIAL DISCIPLINE OF THE BOY.

GENERAL H. K. OLIVER, the distinguished teacher, upon being asked to what one faculty more than any other he attributed his success as a disciplinarian, replied promptly, "To my faculty for not noticing." Taken with this, the response of a bright woman to a certain question may be illuminative. She was asked how she explained the tendency of women to constantly say "Don't" to their children.

"I have sometimes thought," she said laughingly, but with an under-current of seriousness, "that it was because women have usually so little opportunity to exercise authority that they like to display whatever shred of power they have. They often stand in such awe of their servants that they do not dare to pester them with continual remonstrances; but they feel at liberty to try to correct and check their children, especially before others, whom they want to impress."

It is scarcely ever that a woman with this peculiarity is a good disciplinarian. Those who can hardly see their children move without saying, "Be still," "Stop doing that," or "How can you?" are the weak sisters. Their incessant "dinning" at their helpless subjects soon brings their words into disrespect.

General Oliver's wise reply should sink deep into the hearts of all teachers and mothers. They cannot help seeing the little things, but there is no use in speaking of every one of them. If a child seems to have no malice, but only to be heedless, do not pay attention to him every time that you see him doing anything out of the way. Discriminate carefully between the acts which require instant and sharp reprimand or severe penalty, and the little misdemeanors, which may be passed over in love, mercy, and wisdom. In other words, never make your childings so cheap and so frequent that they become meaningless to your child.

But never pass by a flagrant offence. A little boy once said to his younger brother, "You'd better not throw a stone, and break the glass in that lamp-post. That's the kind of thing mamma always whips you for. Sometimes she skips over it when you and I have a little spat, but breaking the lamp-post is one

of the things she doesn't skip. When I used to do it, she never skipped it once."

Never "skip once" anything in which a moral principle is violated. There are scores of petty, disagreeable things, however, of which a child must be broken eventually, but which time and growing sense will aid to eradicate. It won't do to see them every time. It is an art, this learning how to "not notice;" but it is one which it will pay everybody in authority to learn.

A great deal of trouble arises in most large families from the petty tyranny of the larger children over the smaller. In the family of a certain distinguished man, there was much perplexity concerning this matter. At last a method of relief was devised. It consisted in allowing each child in turn to be for a day the captain of the home. This was before the era of the George Junior Republic, but the principle was something like Mr. George's. The captain of the day was made a sort of monitor, who must oversee the conduct of his brothers and sisters, and all of whose reasonable orders they must obey. The mother was to be appealed to only in an extremity. As there were four children between the ages of nine and sixteen in this family, and two younger, who had

to obey, though they could not be captains until they attained the mature age of eight, the experiment was an interesting one.

The captain of the day was helped always first at table, the next younger was helped next, and so on, until the circle was completed. The plan was pursued in this family for a series of years, and is said to have worked beautifully.

"Does the captain of the day never get into difficulties?" the mother was asked.

"Almost never," she replied. "The idea of his responsibility is so fully impressed upon him, that he is for the time being a veritable captain; and we have labored so hard to teach the children that they must be faithful subordinates, that it is rarely necessary to interfere with the captain's discipline. It takes some little organizing and executive ability to get the scheme to running; but when once started, it goes by its own momentum."

To those of us who have groaned under the despotism of older brothers and sisters, this system sounds like a step forward in the world's progress, and its advantages multiply as one ponders. Besides the one sufficient thing, the attempt to establish justice, there is sure to be engendered in each child a sense of

responsibility, and a capacity to enter into the feelings of the care-taker, which would be otherwise undeveloped. In the looking after such matters as the hanging up of outer garments, the picking up of playthings, the putting to rights of rooms; in the endeavor to get at the merits of cases of disagreement; in efforts to inculcate propriety of manner at the table and elsewhere; and in a thousand other things, which must tax the ingenuity of a child somewhat, however ready he may be to pass them up to the highest household tribunal, he learns that honor has its burdens, and that positions of trust involve weariness and care.

But even the captain of the day cannot relieve the mother entirely of certain small matters of daily discipline, which should be her unfailing care. For instance, an excellent old lady said once, "It is a great mistake to think that boys, just because they are boys, need not know anything about the care of their clothes and their rooms. I have taught my boys to mend their own stockings, to make their own beds, and to sew on missing buttons; and they are no less manly men for knowing how to do these things neatly. They have often thanked me, since they grew up, for making them so efficient."

She went on to explain that she did not oblige the boys to perform these duties regularly; but that sometimes for a week or more at a time, in the absence of a servant, or under the pressure of an unusually large family, or as a penalty for a fault, they were made to sew and to perform various household duties.

Her theory is rather hard to practise in most families, in view of the innumerable calls upon the time of school-going boys, who have games and societies and business galore in these modern days, to keep them occupied outside of school-hours; but there is no doubt that to a determined mother such training is practicable, and that it would prove of great use to her boys.

But whatever of service to others and of household knowledge must be omitted in the training of the boy, the most exquisite care of his own person should be enjoined upon him. It is unfortunate if the boy's room is so arranged that he cannot take a daily bath in it. If this is impossible, affairs can surely be so managed that he may enjoy a good bath at least three times a week. Why it is that most boys consider themselves ill-used if they are obliged to show clean ears, necks, faces, and hands continually, is a problem, but it is a

fact; nevertheless, the cleanliness should be strenuously required. The neatness of their surroundings should be no less insisted upon.

Every American visitor to Paris is astonished at the cleanliness of its streets. A Chicago lady while there, forgetting that she was not in her own untidy city, inadvertently tore up a letter upon the street, and dropped the fragments. Suddenly a policeman laid his hand upon her arm, and reprimanded her vehemently. She hastened to pick up the objectionable bits of paper, and, as she pursued her way to her hotel, could not cease congratulating herself that she had escaped arrest.

A letter from a gentleman tells the following story: "An old friend of mine, a Philadelphian, one day bought some grapes in Paris, intending to eat them as he walked along; but the pavements and streets were so scrupulously clean, just washed off, as they are every morning, that he put the skins back into the bag as he walked, instead of throwing them into the gutter. When the grapes were gone, he had a little bag of skins, and his first instinct was to throw the bag into the gutter; but it looked so immaculately clean that he did not dare to do that, and so he crumpled it up and walked along, expecting every moment to find some un-

tidy place where he could throw it. In the course of half-an-hour's stroll, he found no such place; and he finally took the bag home to his hotel, and put it in the fire."

Here is something in the same line from another gentleman:—

"One day while in the city of Vienna," he says, "I had occasion to go to my banker's to obtain my mail from America. Having received it, I took a carriage, and told the driver to go to my hotel. On the way, I opened the letters, read them, and after having finished them, crumpled them in my hand and threw them out of the carriage. I had noticed, as I was reading the letters, that the driver cast his eyes back upon me in an inquiring sort of a way; but I paid no attention. Instantly, however, when I threw the fragments out, he stopped his horse, descended from the box, and proceeded to pick up every scrap of paper. After doing this, he started to drive on, when I noticed a police-officer coming up the street on a run, and calling to my driver to stop. When he reached the carriage, he asked me in excited tones why I had the insolence to throw papers into the streets of Vienna. I explained to him that I was not aware that I was committing any breach of the law, and regretted that I had

done so. He gazed at me with an incredulous look, and mounting the box of the carriage, had me driven to the police-station.

"Upon my arrival at the station, I was charged with obstructing the streets of Vienna and with insolence to a police-officer. I admitted to the officer in charge that I had thrown out the papers, but repeated that I was not aware that I had committed any wrong.

"'What!' he said; 'don't you know better than to throw papers upon the streets? What kind of a country have you? Have your citizens no pride in their city? I can't believe you.' I endeavored to convince him that what I said was true; but he would not believe me, and I was fined ten florins — about four dollars."

It is a pity that similar strictness does not prevail on this side of the Atlantic, and thus help to lighten the burdens of mothers; but since it does not, home discipline in the matter of neatness must be the more rigorously insisted upon. Boys who are taught to pick up and put away things at home will usually be careful abroad, and *vice versa*.

It is every housekeeper's business to see that her apartments are amply supplied with wastebaskets, and that shelves and drawers are pro-

vided for the storing of small belongings. This having been done, all members of the family who have common sense and the power of locomotion should be taught and then compelled to put their things away, each for himself. Boys should be trained to keep the door-yards in order, to hang up articles in the barns and sheds, and to regard the marking of initials or of anything upon the walls as thoroughly disgraceful; but it must always be remembered that, both out-doors and in-doors, people cannot put things away unless places are provided in which to put them.

The boy should have a special nail for each of his hats and caps, a drawer or shelf for his gloves and mittens, a corner for his bicycle, his bat, his tennis-racquet, and his golf-sticks. See that clean clothing is laid neatly in his bureau every week. Surround him with every incentive to neatness, and then insist upon his practising it. See that he never leaves apple-cores upon the window-sills; that pencils are sharpened into a newspaper, and then the shavings carefully emptied; that books and games are picked up after using; that soiled collars and cuffs are tucked into a bag made to receive them; and that burned matches have a tin or china receptacle for them, into which

they shall always be put. Of course no tobacco will be used among your boys, either for chewing or smoking. This does away with all artificial need for expectoration. Teach your boy, when he has catarrh and other forms of colds, the proper use of handkerchiefs, and then see that he has an abundance of them. Every mother should know that, when a child really has catarrh, his handkerchiefs should be washed apart from those of the rest of the family.

A boy need not be "dapper" in order to be neat. Neatness is no necessary mark of a "Miss Nancy." It pertains just as much to the true gentleman as the true lady.

In a home where boys are properly taught and properly treated, they become accustomed to a respect and consideration which are not extended by the general public to them when abroad. They feel this keenly.

Thus, not long ago, at a church concert where there were no reserved seats, two neatly dressed, bright-faced boys, perhaps ten and twelve years old, arrived early, and took possession of two of the best seats in the house. It was perfectly proper that they should do this, for they had come very early on purpose to get good places. They had scarcely settled

themselves, and begun to look around, when an usher came forward with two fashionably attired ladies, and, looking crossly at the boys, beckoned them to come to him. They obeyed. The ladies were given their seats, while they were shown to others, not nearly so good. Presently, as the house began to fill, the same usher made the boys move still farther back. They did not look as if they liked this treatment; but they moved on obediently, like the little gentlemen that they were. The blood of at least one spectator of this injustice boiled with indignation. If those boys had been asked to move again, one earnest protest would have been entered which might perhaps have shamed the bullying usher. It would have been made at the second infringement of their rights but for the popular prejudice against "a scene."

A boy of twelve recently said to his mother, "When we are on the ice, mamma, if the men want us to move, they say, 'Move along, you young rascals! Nobody allowed on that part!' But if it is a lady they are speaking to, they bow and smile and say, 'My dear madam, excuse me, but nobody is allowed just at present to go on this part of the ice. I am sorry to disturb you.' Now, we were behaving every

bit as well as the ladies. They are real mean to talk to us so, but they always do. I suppose it is because we aren't anything but boys."

If a boy is sent to a shop on an errand, he is not served as promptly as a grown-up person, and is often charged more for the same thing. His protest, if he makes any, is usually unheeded; and the poor child has no means of proving the truth of what he says. In dozens of ways like this, boys are made to feel in public that they are a species of blots on the face of nature, and that every man's hand is against them.

Doubtless the boys themselves are somewhat to blame for this state of affairs. They are naughty and trying many times, it must be confessed. But who wouldn't be tempted to be naughty, when, being innocent, he is treated like a criminal? It is the universal testimony that the tendency of human nature is to rise to the opinion which is held of it. If a boy is made to feel as though he were an object of scorn and suspicion, he will usually respond accordingly; for, above all beings, boys are the creatures of impulse and instinct. If you treat him, on the other hand, as you ought to, as an individual with rights to be respected, with good intentions to be honored, and with a

loving little soul to be found underneath that careless mask of freckles and mud-spots and slang, ten to one you will find him a companionable, good-hearted little fellow, who will be as wax under your hand. A boy who has been respected and made the companion of his parents at home, feels cruelly the slings and arrows to which the mere fact that he is a boy is too apt to subject him in public.

Obedience, consideration for the rights of others, neatness, and self-respect, or personal dignity, should, then, be the prime objects of social discipline; but there are certain others which are, perhaps, equally important. One of these is what may be called "staying-power." A child should be early taught that no path in life is free from trials and annoyances, and that he must learn to put up with them. Show him that the strong-minded, the responsible ones are those who have learned this lesson, and who are said to have "staying-power," because they can endure when others give out and faint by the way. In order to get and to keep high places, and in order to make such a record that people will want him to remain with them, a man must have this "staying-power."

On commencing a long journey, a mother repeatedly warned her little five-year-old boy

that he must expect to get very tired before they reached their destination. "It will be hard," she said; "but almost all pleasant things have something hard about them, and you must make up your mind to it."

He remembered her injunction faithfully, and several times she heard him stop half-way in a sigh or a complaint and murmur to himself, "I've *got* to get tired — I've *got* to get tired."

At last the mother leaned back, and exclaimed, almost fretfully, in complete oblivion of her own warning, "Oh, what a tiresome journey! It seems as if we should never get there!"

"Why, mamma," the little boy reminded her gently, "don't you remember we've *got* to get tired?"

He had learned a valuable lesson which he never forgot.

Instruction in modesty and humility is something which should be daily administered, using every possible peg upon which to hang a lesson. The child is usually born a positivist. He knows exactly how everything ever was, or is, or shall be. There are only a few of those model families in which "It is," "It isn't," and "You did," and "I didn't," do not play a prominent part. In Benjamin Franklin's Au-

tobiography he several times alludes to the fact that early in life he recognized the wisdom and propriety of avoiding dogmatic expressions, and that throughout his whole career he made it a practice to say, "It is my opinion that this is so," instead of "I know that this is so." The dogmatic child becomes the obstinate and offensively positive man, whose childish assertions reveal the immaturity of his thought.

Other considerations than may at first appear, enter into the need of teaching a child early in life to avoid this vulgar habit. Modesty of statement will almost invariably tend to produce a corresponding modesty of thought; and thus that overweening conceit, which is at the root of many an unsuccessful and embittered life, will be discouraged.

The most frequent occasions on which this peculiarity displays itself occur, by a strange paradox, in the discussion of the most exalted themes, such as literature, art, philosophy, politics, and religion. In a notable assembly not long ago, a certain well-known man remarked with the air of one who utters a finality, "There is no place for the dialect novel. It was a fad; and, like all fads, it has practically passed away."

"I cannot agree with you," cried a spirited

woman. "I believe that true dialect, skilfully rendered, will always possess a charm for a large class of readers. I like it very much myself."

"You will be ashamed to acknowledge it a few years from now," he said, with an affected lightness which covered a deep disdain. He then went on to enunciate certain dicta regarding the place of the novel, in so positive and unqualified a manner as to amount to an insult to his hearers, many of whom were quite as well able to judge of literary merit as himself, and most of whom held quite different opinions from his.

Intolerance of the opinions of others, and undue confidence in one's own, should be utterly disallowed in the family circle. It is easy enough to reprove the children for this fault. The setting of an example will be found harder. As Portia said, in the effective language of the master of words, "I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching."

CHAPTER XI.

THE MORAL DISCIPLINE OF THE BOY.

WITHIN the limits of a somewhat restricted territory in the West, it has happened that three young men have recently gone astray. They are strangers to each other, and have pursued their ways independently; but they have come to the same end and by similar means. They began by spending their evenings in the street when they were not over fifteen years old. Then they became frequenters of billiard-halls and drinking-saloons, and their doom was fixed.

Two of these young men were brought up as "brown-stone boys," in the greatest elegance. They were beautiful children, and were always arrayed with exquisite taste. They were fondled and petted far more than the average boy. Apparently all three had in their home surroundings everything which is necessary to incite high aspirations; their parents were church-going, educated, more than respectable mem-

bers of society; and yet these dearly beloved sons of theirs have gone almost hopelessly to the bad.

A good man who has chanced to talk confidentially with all three of these poor fellows, remarked not long ago, "It is singular that all of them ascribe their bad habits to the same cause."

"What is it?"

"They say that *their mothers* are to blame."

"That's a nice, chivalric kind of an accusation."

"Nevertheless, they all three make it, and without knowing one another either. No one of them knows what sort of a story the others tell, yet they all say in so many words that *their mothers* are to blame for their ruin. In all my life I never heard a man blame his mother before, and I told them, one and all, that they were cubs and curs for doing it; but they insisted that, though they had broken their mothers' hearts, their mothers themselves were to blame for it."

One of them said: "My mother was always busy with her charitable work. You know she was president of the Missionary Society and a dozen others. She used to make up her reports and add up her accounts in the evenings.

When I came home from school in the afternoon, she was always off attending some meeting or reception. She did not seem to care what I was doing, so long as I didn't bother her. I suppose she did not think it possible that her son could enjoy vulgar company; but I came to like the fellows whom I met in the street, and to like what they liked."

The second one said: "My father was very nervous. My mother sat with her sewing beside the lamp in the evenings. We fellows would study until we got tired, and then we would get to scuffling and having a little rough play together; and my father would say to my mother, 'Can't you keep those boys quiet?' And my mother, instead of proposing a game with us, or taking us into another room and reading a jolly book with us, would say, 'You had better go out-doors, boys, and see if you can't amuse yourselves out there.' So we went out, — and we amused ourselves."

The third young man said: "My father was stern with me; and when he would scold me, my mother would come around to my room and tell me that my father was cruel and should not talk so to me. When I wanted money, and my father would not give it to me, she would hand it to me on the sly. It was understood

between us, that we should combine to deceive my father. When I grew older, and my father said I must go to bed, I would tease my mother to let me go out; and she would leave some door or window open, through which I could get in. I was an only son, and her idea of showing her love for me was to let me have everything I wanted. Well, I have had it; and it has made a nice kind of fellow of me, hasn't it? I hated to make her feel bad, but I told her it was she who had brought it on herself. It was she who taught me to deceive; it was she who let me into the street at night; it was she who allowed me to form the appetites which got the upper hand of me in the end."

This is no fancy sketch. It is the solemn truth. These boys are at this moment alive and dissipating away their manhood in these United States, and these words have been taken down from their own lips.

All parents have doubtless wished that they might be permitted to rear one family as an experiment, with the privilege of breaking it up at maturity, if not successful, and then starting afresh. Some one has remarked, that, from what is known of the methods of grandparents, there is not much hope that a second chance would prove more fortunate than the first; but,

of course, the original wish includes the return of the period of youth and strength, which rules the grandparent out of the comparison.

Some great writer has said that our prayers are prophets. We take it that he did not mean the prayers of our lips, but of our deepest hearts. There is often a difference between the two, as there must have been between those of the three mothers who have just been described. Matthew Arnold says:—

“Below the surface-stream, shallow and light,
Of what we say we feel, — below the stream,
As light, of what we think we feel, there flows,
With noiseless current, strong, obscure, and deep,
The central stream of what we feel indeed.”

Thus a fashionable and worldly mother, as she displayed her seventeen-year-old son's large collection of pipes and smoking-caps to a friend, deplored to her his tendencies. The friend was not a “society” woman, and her boy did not smoke. The two young men were of about the same age; but one had been brought up to think that elegance was the first consideration; the other, that elegance came fourth or fifth on the list, and that character and brains came first.

“Percy must have been very enterprising to

have collected so many and such a variety of pipes," remarked the visitor politely.

A shade of discontent crossed the other mother's face.

"I would rather he had waited a few years before he began to smoke," she said; "and I wish he didn't care quite so much about having his clothes right; and I wish he would brace up and go to college to please his father, but he is dreadfully nervous about examinations. You are very lucky to have a boy who isn't nervous. He could never be such a scholar if he were as nervous as Percy."

"No," returned the first mother, with a sermon trembling on her lip, but resolutely forced back, "Tom isn't nervous, thank Heaven!"

"Strange how different boys are!" mused the other mother. "Now, I have talked and talked to Percy! His father and I want him to read more, and go more into science; and he *is* interested in some good things, like art and the drama; and he likes to attend athletic exhibitions, but he says it is too much trouble to go into athletics himself. He isn't really very well, I think."

And yet the fashionable mother's boy was, on the whole, just about what she had unconsciously willed to have him. She would never

have been satisfied if he had dressed as carelessly as "Tom," nor if he had not known just how to conduct himself in every social exigency, — a knowledge which can come only by practice. She would not have been pleased if he had not been the best dancer in his set — if he had not been, in short, the most elegant young fellow that she knew. She forgot that all the gifts and graces cannot grow together ; and, with that fatuous lack of the sense of proportion which often distinguishes fashionable women, she had preferred to make sure of the lower graces before she strenuously cultivated the higher. Then she had found her material already hardened into shape, while yet the creature was imperfect in his most vital parts, — an indolent, fastidious, wrong-headed young coxcomb, whose life or whose loss meant nothing to the world. True, she had talked to him ; but the boy might well have quoted to her, as we have already quoted, "How can I hear what you *say*, when what you *are* is thundering so in my ears?"

From the very beginning, the mother must be sure that her ideals are right, and that she really wants, with all her heart and soul, that her little one should be, first, a man of the highest moral and religious character ; second,

that he should have a well-furnished, intelligent mind; and, later, that the purely social attractions should be cultivated in him. If the order is reversed for a moment, she will have trouble. Do not be discouraged if there seem to be serious moral deficiencies in your child, and say, "I fear that he will never be truthful, or really virtuous. I will try to make as well-mannered a creature of him as possible, and just worry along as best I can with his morals." Pay no attention, broadly speaking, to anything else, until his moral standards are straightened, and until his moral strength is plainly increasing.

An excellent woman, who has worked much among the poor, related recently one of her experiences with a bad boy.

"The child told me a dozen lies during a single half-hour," she declared. "I consider his case hopeless."

"But he had probably never been taught not to tell lies," expostulated one of her hearers.

"Taught! You don't think such things can be taught! They have to be born with people, or they never come at all."

"Do not attempt any more work among the poor until you disabuse yourself of that idea!" exclaimed her friend warmly. "Why, one of

the two great maxims of Plato was, 'Virtue may be taught.' Children, like the boy of whom you speak, often have confused notions of right and wrong, and no adequate conception of their responsibility to do right. They are in a moral darkness, which is to moral light what mental ignorance is to full intellectual intelligence."

Her friend was only half-inclined to believe this statement, but it is hoped that she became wiser upon reflection. There is no doubt that many a man is bad because he has never been taught to discriminate between the evil and the good, and is enveloped in a moral stupor. It is readily conceivable to a student of metaphysics that many of our worst politicians often consider themselves blameless when they are really infamous. For every soul which is born with a proper ethical sense, there are probably fifty, perhaps hundreds, born with none at all, or a positively perverted one. Again, it should be impressed that the teaching of virtue, which has nothing to do with theology, may be called a civic and personal branch of study, and should be the foremost object in our public and private schools and colleges; for upon the thoroughness and soundness of such teaching the prosperity of the nation depends far more than

upon book-learning. The thousand subtle ways in which wrong is made to appear right in politics, commerce, finance, and society; the casuistry which is often employed to excuse lapses from strict rectitude; the apparently slight, but really vital deflections from the path of honor by men who seem still to retain the respect of the community,—these should be analyzed and labelled for the benefit of our growing boys and girls as fast as they can bear them,—especially for our girls, many of whom go to destruction through sheer ignorance. Under our present system, they learn the alphabet of books, but they do not begin to know the alphabet of their own souls. The ancient Greeks were beyond us in these respects, as well as in many others.

Indeed, there is something almost shocking in the way in which things are taken for granted in the training of children. We assume that the proper emotion will necessarily arise in them on every occasion, when, in fact, it is no more to be expected than that they should be informed upon some current topic of which they have never heard. Occasions should be foreseen and invented in teaching a child, and thus he will be prepared to act when they really arise.

In a thousand ways, and every day, the mother may, by fine and patient strokes, form the moral sense of her child. Silly and uncultivated women cannot do this. A keenly developed intelligence, as well as love, is necessary. Even a university training can hardly make the mind of a mother acute enough properly to guard and guide her child; and yet the short-sighted public is in the habit of inquiring what is the use of colleges for women who get married as soon as they receive their diplomas. A very special use of colleges for women is to make them better mothers, since anything which increases their intelligence does that. The silliest woman is capable of replenishing the earth with children, but it takes the highest and finest wisdom to bring them up.

And do not for a moment imagine that the boy or girl whose moral sense seems lacking or perverted is hopeless. Such a child may in time, as is often the case with the slow-brained one, surpass his companion who was originally endowed with sharper and quicker faculties. Fall back upon the wise old Platonian maxim, "Virtue may be taught."

Perhaps the most common and disheartening difficulty which mothers encounter in the moral training of their children is untruthfulness.

"I have punished and I have punished," sighed one, "and yet I cannot believe a word that child tells me."

"Is he of a sly, scheming disposition?" asked the sympathizing friend to whom the mother was confiding her troubles.

"Oh! not in the least. He is transparent to the point of simplicity. His little deceits are never deep. There is no skill about them."

"You wouldn't think, would you?" said her friend after a little pause, "that I was considered a confirmed liar when I was a child?"

The mother looked at her with wide-open eyes.

"If I have one friend whose word I would trust more than another's, you are that one!" she exclaimed.

This was entirely true. The lady in question, a woman of high Christian character, was sincere and honest to a fault.

"Nevertheless, I am ashamed to say that I can remember telling many lies in my childhood," she confessed calmly, "and I can remember why. I regarded lying—a distinguished man has put this into an aphorism for me—as 'an intellectual method of meeting a dilemma.' Its moral quality did not impress

me. I knew I should get a whipping if I confessed my misdemeanor. There was a chance that I might escape if I told a lie. I was terribly, cravenly, afraid of the rod. My mother meant to do me good, but she came very near ruining me for life. Naturally I was of an open disposition, as you say your little boy is. I believe that whipping will make a liar of any timid child, if not of all children."

"But what would you do when a child had exhausted all the methods of punishment you could devise? You would not let him go without any punishment at all, would you?"

"I believe that would be better than making a liar of him."

The mother was deeply impressed by her friend's words. The next time that her little boy offended, this scene occurred:—

Mother: "Bridget tells me, Henry, that you told her, if she did not let you in quick, you would cut the back door with a hatchet."

Henry (six years old): "I never said such a thing — there!"

Mother: "But you had the hatchet in your hand."

Henry: "Oh, the great story-teller! I haven't had the hatchet to-day."

Mother: "Henry, come here. Here is the

mark of the hatchet where you struck the door — it is fresh — and the hatchet made it, and you did it.”

Henry (defiantly): “I never!” — then beginning to cry — “I didn’t make near so big a mark as that. I didn’t mean to make any mark, but Bridget was so mean!”

Mother (with tears gathering in her eyes): “O Henry! what shall I do with you?”

Henry (screaming): “Oh, don’t whip me! I won’t ever do it again — truly, truly!”

Mother (clasping him in her arms): “My dear boy, I am not going to whip you. This is too serious for that. Now tell me all about it.”

(Henry, reassured, tells the same story which Bridget has just told.)

Mother: “There! Now I know how it happened. I always want to know, and you can tell me nicely. I don’t see why you don’t always. But you told me you didn’t do anything. That made me feel mixed up about it.”

Henry (sullenly): “I didn’t want you to whip me.”

Mother: “Do you think I ought to let it go without punishing you at all?”

Henry: “Ye-es.”

Mother : " But you might cut the door with a hatchet again, when Bridget has her hands in the bread."

Henry (earnestly) : " No, I won't."

Mother : " But, if you are not sorry now, how shall I know that you will be then?"

Henry (slowly) : " I am sorry now."

The mother, having made him apologize a little more fully, explained to him still further the enormity of what he had done, and then they had a little prayer, the child repeating after the mother the words which she put together for him.

Henry told several falsehoods after this; but the mother dealt with him in a similar way, making everything very plain to him. He is now ten years old, and more truthful than, perhaps, most children of his age. A similar course may not affect all children alike, but try something else besides hard punishments for lying.

To inculcate the desire for virtue should be an even stronger ambition in the mother than to instill the mere knowledge of it. The soul of a child should be made to hunger and thirst after righteousness by every device of intellectual ingenuity and love.

A large boy was once scolding a smaller one

at the close of a summer vacation because a certain task remained unaccomplished.

"You promised your mother," said this youthful mentor, with all the severity which marks his class, "that you would study your arithmetic at least fifteen minutes each day, and you haven't studied ten minutes all summer. You've had lots of time. Why didn't you do it?"

The little boy shuffled his feet and looked miserable. At last he whined, "I ain't had so much time as you think. I wanted to get along in my 'rithmetic much as she wanted to have me."

"You wanted to!" sniffed the young Daniel contemptuously.

"Yes, I did want to."

"You might as well not have wanted to. You didn't want to enough."

There was a fund of philosophy in that last terse expression. Everybody knows that a certain undesirable abode is paved with good intentions. What we want enough to do, we do. Plato says, "No man is willingly bad." We all want to be good — but most of us don't want to enough.

Most young people want an education. Some of them want it enough to get it at any

cost. More do not want it enough to work hard for it.

Most parents want their children to be good ; but comparatively few want it enough to labor in season and out of season for it, and to make their own lives a pattern for their children to follow.

Drunkards want to reform, but they don't want to enough. The revolting creatures of the slums in a vague way want to be decent, but they don't want to enough.

Most of us want to have religion "pure and undefiled," but we don't want it enough to strive and pray as those who will not let the angel go unless he bless them. When we want it enough, God will give it to us. Those are happy parents who with His help create in their children that slakeless thirst for all high things, to satisfy which will make them work strenuously a lifetime through !

It is said that many people cannot want anything very much. They are weak and colorless in character, and take life as it comes to them, without much effort to change their condition. The capacity for wanting things, the most valuable which man inherits, is denied to them. Do not repine if your boy early shows a marked desire for this thing, or that, and even

if he kicks and screams when his wishes must be thwarted. Thank Heaven that he has the power to want thus vigorously! Only train this power so that he shall want the right things, and want them enough, and the success of his life is assured.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE OF THE BOY.

IN a certain "Mothers' Meeting" in a large city, where the religious instruction of children was under discussion, one lady arose and said inquiringly, "I suppose we all pray every night with our children?"

There was a pause. Two or three ladies murmured something about "having the children always repeat their prayers, of course." One or two frankly said, "No, I don't."

"It seems to me that the mere repetition of a set prayer," said the lady who had arisen, "is a very small part of instruction in the duty and art of prayer, as it is enjoined upon us in the Scriptures. Bishop Vincent says that children should be trained how to eat, how to drink, how to breathe, how to walk, how to run, how to play, how to obey, how to stop, how to wait, how to help, how to resist, how to reason, and how to deny themselves, long before going to school. In the same way, the child, it seems

to me, must be taught to pray. It is almost too private and sacred a thing to speak of in public; but as we are all mothers together, perhaps I can have the courage to talk about it.

“I found it impossible, when my eldest child became old enough to make up a prayer for himself, to induce him to do it. He was too shy and too reserved to undertake it. He could not seem to find the words. I meditated upon the matter, and prayed for light upon it. At last I saw that, as the most effective instruction is by means of the object-lesson, it was my duty to offer such a prayer as I thought he ought to, until he should learn to do it for himself. Therefore, instead of offering a mere formal and conventional prayer, as I had been used to, I began to offer such a prayer as I imagined he would want to, using expressions like, ‘when I grow up,’ and ‘help me to obey my father and mother and teachers,’ just as if he were talking himself. The prayer is always very short and plain. As the younger children became old enough to understand, I adopted the same custom with them. Sometimes we all kneel down together; or I pray with each one separately, often going up to the child’s room after he is in bed, for I do not insist upon any special attitude in prayer. Indeed,

I consider highly dangerous the old custom of kneeling beside the mother's knee in the night-clothes to repeat a prayer. The tendency then is to hurry through the exercise as fast as possible, in order to avoid catching cold.

"Many times the little prayer which I offer seems to me tame and formal and lacking in fervor; but I always try to enter into the feelings of the individual children, and I especially try to show them that prayer is not to be made a mere catalogue of the things that they want, — that it is to be largely an expression of gratitude to God, and should be a communion with Him such as we love to enjoy with intimate friends. I often say in different ways, 'Help us never to get so used to Thy mercies that we shall forget to thank Thee for them, or cease to feel warmly our indebtedness to Thee, as they are renewed day by day.'

"If there has been a quarrel in the family, and Tom has struck Bessie, or Bessie has hurt Tom, I pray that God will help us to see the coarse, intolerable wickedness of striking and hurting each other in our plays; that He will teach us to put down the violent passions which rise in us when we are wronged, and help us to love fair play, and to hate cheating and teasing.

"If there is a national holiday, I thank God for our country, that it has been preserved so long; that so many heroic men have been glad to lay down their lives for it, and pray that we may be ready to do so if it becomes necessary; that its rulers may be guided wisely; and that we, when we grow up, may try to keep our country pure and noble by living ourselves pure lives, and by supporting only true and honest men for office.

"Of course, I try always to make what I say very vivid and strong to the children, and to feel myself and make them feel that we are standing in the very presence of God, who is listening attentively to what we say, and is ready to grant our petitions if it is best for us. That they feel deeply the reality of these little prayers, I know; because one of my boys, who is very quick-tempered, has often begun to cry in the most heart-broken way when I have pleaded with God to take away his bad temper, and give him one that is sweet and kind, and which will not let him say 'I won't,' and other naughty words, to his mamma who loves him so. I confess that I am often affected to tears myself, by the thought of these innocent little beings kneeling so unquestioningly before their Maker, and by the homely little peti-

tions which it sometimes seems necessary to make.

“One reason why this prayer, made when we are all by ourselves, and often in the dark, is so effective, and so much more real than the morning prayer, is because, as you must all have noticed, the most impressionable time with a child is just as he is going to bed. The words spoken to, or with, a child then are usually worth all the counsel which can be given during the daytime.

“That they enjoy this little prayer, — so simple and so short that I am almost ashamed to mention it here, — is proved by the fact that they often say, ‘Don’t forget your little prayer, mamma;’ and if I am going out to dinner, or to any entertainment, they say, ‘Why, mamma, you can’t say your little prayer if you go away and don’t get back until we have gone to sleep.’

“As they grow older, they should be urged to speak for themselves, and gentle corrections should be made if they tend to develop a selfish spirit, or to fall into set expressions, as so many do in offering oral prayer. But blessings will follow prayers made with one’s children; for one can say in such circumstances words which would not be thought of, and would not be appropriate, under any other.”

Nearly every woman who was present at this meeting thanked this mother personally for the help which she had given them. At least one mother practised upon it, and is glad to hand it on to others.

This duty of prayer is rightly considered one of the most binding which the Christian knows. We must pray, and we must teach our children to pray, or else our spiritual lamp flickers and expires; but the long-drawn-out prayers of a former generation are not now in order, either in the pulpit or in the closet. *Laborare est orare*, is wisely recognized in these days as a truthful saying, and worthy of all acceptance. Probably prayer often precedes an intelligent conception of work. Our great American seer never said anything more profound than this: "No man ever prayed heartily without learning something." And the poet is right when he sings, —

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of."

That work should go hand in hand with prayer is far more widely understood than of old. We are to pray fervently, and lay our case before the Lord; but, having done this, we are to be constantly on the lookout to discover

whether we be not capable of becoming the instruments for the accomplishment of our own prayers.

Thus a certain woman was deeply concerned for the salvation of her sixteen-year-old son. He had acquired the habit of smoking, and constantly sought evil company. There seemed to be danger that he would go to ruin.

"Night and morning," sighed the mother, "I pray to the Lord for his soul. It cannot be that He will disregard such heartfelt petitions."

"But what have you done to make your home attractive to your boy?" inquired a practical friend. "Do you provide games and other amusements for him? Do you invite him to accompany you to concerts and good plays? Do you invite his friends to come and spend the evenings with him?"

"Oh! I do not like games. I never did. And my husband doesn't like me to go out much in the evenings. He doesn't want to, and we have got into the habit of staying quietly at home. As for Ed's friends, there isn't one of them that I would have in the house."

This boy, like others who have been mentioned in this book, had been virtually driven away from his home in order to enjoy himself

even moderately. One cannot help wondering whether God could consistently grant a prayer made, like this mother's, against all reason and right. The woman's work had been laid plainly before her. Her mother love and tact, if she had not been selfish, lazy, and stupid, should have shown her how to do it. It surely was not the Lord's province to do her work for her.

An elderly woman was once deeply concerned for the salvation of her young nephew. He was thoughtful, and sometimes attended religious meetings; but though many of his companions were coming forward and confessing the Saviour, he seemed to have no intention of joining them. One day she confided to a friend that she had prayed and prayed for this young man until she had become discouraged.

"Carlyle says, you know," returned her friend, "that the end of life is not a thought, but an action. Have you spoken to him yourself?"

"Why, no. I don't think I should have any influence over him, and I might offend him."

"Well, I don't know how you feel about it, but I should be ashamed to ask God for something, when I wasn't lifting a finger myself to get it," remarked her friend, frankly; "I don't

believe He usually answers such prayers. Until we want a thing ourselves enough to work for it as hard as we can, I think He might properly doubt our sincerity."

The aunt spoke to her nephew at once, and a few days afterward he did indeed give his heart to Christ. He has now been a professing Christian for many years, and has never been found wanting.

Ruskin says: "The real, active, rational worship is that by which men act while they live; not that which they talk of when they die." The real, active, rational prayer is that which enlists all the powers of our nature to accomplish. It is just as much our duty to use the other means which God has given to us for gratifying our honest desires as to use prayer. Nothing is more clearly shown in the Scriptures than that we are given our talents for the carrying out of His will, just as much as we are given the gift of prayer for the carrying out of His will.

The custom of family prayer is not now nearly so common as it used to be, even among church-going people. This is unfortunate; for family devotions, properly conducted, are an important element in the religious training of the child. A touching story was recently told

regarding a sensitive child who was instrumental in establishing a family altar.

The Hemphills were a wealthy family, consisting of a father, mother, and four children. The eldest son had graduated from college, and was now married and practising medicine in a Western city. The eldest daughter was also married, and lived in the far West. Only Gertrude, now nineteen, and Janet, aged eleven, were at home. One summer, Mr. and Mrs. Hemphill and these two daughters went to visit the Speedwells.

The Hemphills had attended more or less regularly a fashionable church. They had contributed liberally to its support, and the children nominally went to Sunday-school, — not a common thing in these days among the most fashionable people, and not especially common with the Hemphills, because the children were most of the time either at their country home, or in Europe, or travelling about their own country. They had not therefore received the amount of religious instruction usual among the class of people to which they belonged.

The Speedwells had been intimate with the Hemphills for many years, but it so chanced that the Hemphill children had never stayed

in the Speedwell home, until the occasion of this visit. The religion of the Speedwells was of the genuine, living, unobtrusive kind. Their home was thoroughly Christian; and every morning before breakfast, father, mother, and children gathered together, and enjoyed readings from the Scriptures and prayer. Little Janet, singular as it may seem, had never before been in a home where family worship was observed. She was of a serious and thoughtful temperament, and was deeply impressed with the beautiful exercise. Her father afterward told Mrs. Speedwell the following story:—

“On our way home from your house Janet and I had a quiet little talk together; and she said, ‘I like the Speedwells very much, papa; and I would like to do a good many things that they do. Now, their way of reading and praying together in the morning is very nice, I think. Why don’t we do that way?’

“I told her that it was pretty hard to get our family together in the morning. Mamma wasn’t very strong; and she got tired out going to so many parties with Gertrude, and they both wanted to lie in bed in the morning. I didn’t believe we could manage it. Janet had to admit the truth of what I said; but she

thought a minute, and then broke out with, 'But you and I could have prayers together, papa. Why couldn't we?'

"'Oh!' I said, 'you think that you would be up for it; but you would want to sleep over too, and papa would have to go down town, and we couldn't keep it up.' — 'Yes, we could, papa,' she persisted; 'I know that I could keep it up. I wouldn't let anything hinder me. Now, you try it, will you?'

"Of course I promised that I would. That was two years ago, and Janet and I have had prayers together ever since. Never when she has been well, and we have been at home together, has she lost a morning. It has been a crown of blessing to us both."

"Verily," breathed one to whom this touching story was told, "verily a little child shall lead them!"

The habit of church-going, at least of attendance upon one church-service each Sunday and of one or more church-meetings during the week, will be found an important aid in the religious training of the child.

It is, perhaps, a healthful rebound from the rigid Puritan methods which has incited certain of our so-called "progressive" orthodox church-members to attack "formalism."

"We are not saved by going through certain ceremonies," these conscientious critics are in the way of remarking haughtily. "Our religion is not merely

" 'To go
To church one day in seven.' "

"If we are to base our religion upon stated forms of worship, we might as well become high ritualists at once. The true evangelical doctrine is that out of the heart are the issues of life — not out of obedience to empty forms."

There is something rather captivating to superficial thinkers in this species of argument. One of that class, though she happens to be a graduate of a leading college, and the author of several books, remarked seriously one day : "I found that I was getting into a mere rut of going to church. I was going from habit, without giving the subject any proper thought. Of course I stopped it at once. I shall not go again until the fresh, spontaneous impulse comes to me to go. Otherwise I cannot believe that I shall be benefited by what has come to be a mechanical observance."

This casuistry struck the listener dumb; but there are cardinal truths which ought to have been launched at once at the speaker, and

which would have punctured her wind-bag of logic. She should have remembered that the human being of the highest order is the most absolutely governed by lofty, fixed principles. An old definition of a principle, given by Mr. J. W. Dickinson, one of the profoundest of instructors, was, "The way in which anything acts." Men of character act in a certain way, which can be calculated upon by those who know them. They are not standing and watching themselves for "fresh, spontaneous impulses." They, like all who have arrived at an age of discretion, have come to certain definite conclusions with regard to the conduct of their lives; and they are plodding along in the path of duty, necessarily a strait and monotonous one, considering themselves fortunate if they have established a habit of doing the right thing at the right time, even though the process may partake somewhat of the nature of routine. They do not wait to see whether they feel at any particular time like doing right. They know they ought to do right; and it is their set purpose, not requiring twenty different decisions each day, to do right. They rejoice, instead of being shocked, if they find that duty is gaining, and that, even if the "fresh, spontaneous impulse" be lacking, their feet turn

of their own accord in the proper direction. They go to their daily business, whether they have any special desire to do so or not. If they have taken the vows of God upon them, they seek His house at the set time, in rain or shine, and without waiting for any craving of the natural heart, which in all of us is usually hankering after what it ought not to have, rather than for immortal blessings. Duty is not generally what the children call "clear fun"; but the conscientious man performs it just the same, without waiting to feel happy in the prospect. He does not from time to time examine his heart with a microscope to see whether that organ is burning with a desire to do right, and resolve not to do right unless it is. All of this silly sophistry about "fresh, spontaneous impulses" sinks into its true insignificance under the pure white light of conscience.

There are many plausible and even sound excuses which are made by the non-church-goer to defend his practice, but the duty of church-going outweighs them all.

In the first place, Do we want the churches kept up or not? What kind of a community should we have if there were no churches in it? Do we want the churches to be strong and

healthy, or sickly and weak? We either want them to live, or we do not. If we do not, it is our duty to separate ourselves from them at once, and to go to work for whatever other agency seems more likely than they to regenerate and purify humanity, and promote the progress of civilization. Those who do not desire the progress of the race, do not belong in decent society. They are anarchists and knaves. If we long for the prosperity of the churches, and yet are unwilling to do our share toward their support, we lay that burden upon others and shirk it ourselves, which is the height of meanness.

"But," you may say, "I pay my proportion of the minister's salary. I don't shirk that part of the business."

This may be true ; but, as in charitable work, the money is by far the smaller part of the duty. The really effective support of the church comes from the personal presence of the members and their families at its meetings. Nothing can make up for the absence of that. Well-filled pews, crowded prayer-meetings, steady, unfaltering devotion to the service of the church, — in these lies its prosperity and nowhere else.

A good old deacon once said, "We should

go to church, not to be edified, but to worship God." We should not wait for a "fresh, spontaneous impulse" to go, any more than we should wait for a "fresh, spontaneous impulse" to weed our gardens, when that duty devolves upon us.

If the boy's parents go regularly to church, and if he goes with them, the habit will become so fixed that there will never be any question when Sunday morning comes around, such as, "Have I got to go to church?" He will get far more out of the service, even when he is very small, than you can guess. It will promote reverence for sacred things; and though he may have moments when he will dislike the exercise, these will pass, and in his later life he will bless you for teaching him to go to church. His religious training will be wretchedly incomplete without it.

Then, do not depend entirely upon the Sunday school for your children's knowledge of the Scriptures. Study and read the Word of God with them every day. Make it indeed the Book of their counsel and the Man of their choice, — the lamp which shall light their feet. The instruction of the wisest mother must be deficient. No father can possibly foresee the trials and peculiar temptations which his child

must encounter, and prepare him for them; but somewhere in the Bible the boy will find a word for any dilemma in which he may be placed. It is the oracle of the soul in its every mood.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BOY'S POLITICS.

"ANOTHER new liquor-saloon!" exclaimed a mother, who was walking the streets of a city in which neither "high license" nor "prohibition" prevailed. Her little son, eight years old, held her hand.

"One more place," she continued sadly, "where men will spend their money foolishly, and perhaps become drunkards."

The child looked at the gay front of the drinking-place, with an expression of angry concern gathering on his eager little face. Then he burst forth with, "What do they let 'em do it for? *Ain't there any Christians in Congress?*"

It was plain that ideas of law and restraint, of the difference between good rulers and good government and bad rulers and bad government, were struggling for form and coherence in the child's mind. The mother seized her opportunity. She explained briefly some of

the evils of the saloon, what "high license" and "prohibition" meant, and something of the arguments which are advanced on both sides; how all good people are agreed that the drinking-saloon is an unmixed evil, and how the only disagreement is with regard to the means of suppressing it; how the liquor men are active in politics, and the temperance men are often too busy with their own affairs to look carefully after legislation; how voters are often bribed, — and as many more details of the matter as the boy seemed to care to hear.

He listened with avidity, and asked many intelligent questions. He had received a lesson in politics which he did not forget, as his chance remarks showed for months afterward. The lesson was followed up by others on arbitration, the tariff, public education, street-cleaning, road-making, silver and gold money, and others, given whenever the child seemed ready to listen; for this mother had found out by experience that it is only when the mood is on him that it is worth while to talk with a boy on serious subjects. She was determined that if men get their opinions, as the poet says, —

" As boys learn to spell
By reiteration chiefly,"

she would see to it that her boy formed opinions which she believed to be right.

At a brilliant public gathering in New York a distinguished clergyman recently made an address on education. In its course, he had occasion to speak of his aged mother, who was still living. He alluded to her counsels in many departments, and his great indebtedness to those counsels, "but," he added with great earnestness, and as if it were the very best thing he could say of her, "with all her learning and piety, with the extensive variety of themes upon which she constantly instructed us, she never mentioned the subject of politics."

And yet this good man really thought that his mother had done her duty by her children, when she had never mentioned the subject of politics!

Is this what ails our political system? Are the decadence in the character of our public men, the corruption among our legislative bodies, the general contempt now felt for politics, because, perhaps, the mothers have never mentioned this subject to their children?

It is conceded on all sides that the chief home education of a child must come from his mother. The struggle for a living absorbs the energies of the father. Beyond the giving of

an occasional reproof or punishment, half the fathers in the land talk little with their children. It is expected that the school-teacher will instruct them in the various branches of learning, and that the mother will attend to their moral, religious, and social training. Neither the teacher nor the mother usually thinks to instruct the child in politics; though the foundation principles of it are always the same, no matter what party names may be used. Politics might well be taught in every public school; for it is only the broad ideas of honesty, the greatest good of the greatest number, patriotism, and morality generally. Very likely neither the teacher nor the mother knows enough to master these principles, and present them to the child. The singular idea that a woman who is only to be married and bring up children needs no education, is one of those relics of barbarism which still linger among us. There is no calling on earth which requires so much education as that of a mother.

In the end, therefore, the political education of the boy must come from the mother, or not at all. It is not too much to say that, unless she shows him how to be a good citizen, explains to him his true relation to the state and the

nation, and impresses upon him his duty to the public, the chances are more than even that he will never have right ideas upon politics and the personal responsibility of the patriot. Politics, it must be remembered, means the science of government; and woe unto our republic if our mothers do not seize every opportunity to strongly, fervently, affectionately "mention" politics to their sons. For no way has been discovered, so far as we know, by which children can be given correct views of life, whether it be of life's decimal fractions, life's social amenities, or the government of life, but by first implanting in their minds correct ideas of the object and its relations; and second by the incessant repetition and illustration of those ideas until the child is fairly saturated with the proper views. The young of the human race are born, so far as their actions permit us to judge, without a proper bias in any direction, — in fact (in spite of the new theology), with apparently a strong bent toward total depravity. With them, in every department of culture, the rule must be the old one of "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little."

The education of our boys in the first prin-

ciples of politics is just as important, especially in America, as their education in the first principles of any other branch of learning. We have shown that it is upon the mother that this instruction chiefly devolves. Yet how many mothers are there, who, while bewailing the "corruption of politics," and the "horrid men" who are too likely to hold our offices, are making it clear to their own boys just what their course should be toward their own government? Every thoughtful man or woman must have been filled with anxiety, during the past few years, for the very existence of our government, such is the demoralization of politics. The hope of the nation lies in these boys who are growing up. In this view of the case, every mother ought to study carefully the principles of politics, and the features of the present political situation; get hold of their philosophy, so far as she is able, and reduce the whole to elementary form for the benefit of her children.

In the first place, a boy should be made to understand that in time of war a true man counts it not too much to give his life for his country. Make it plain to him that it is just as important to save his country in time of peace from the selfishness and materialism

which would overwhelm it, as to save it from the bayonets of the physical enemy in time of war. Explain to him the almost universal greed of human nature for selfish gain. Show him how from the earliest times the revenues of states have been plundered by dishonest officials, and how vital it is that honest men should be chosen to positions of trust. Only the eternal vigilance of conscientious, well-taught citizens can guard the state from its pretended friends, who often, robed in light, and speaking with silver tongues, plead for office chiefly that they may line their own pockets and those of their friends. A patriotic man must give some thought, every day of every year, to the affairs of his town, his county, his state, his nation. He must go to the primary meetings where the "slates" are prepared. He must attend the later caucuses. When election time comes, he must never fail to be on hand to cast his vote, just as he would take an oath in court, just as sacredly and just as conscientiously. He must beware of partisanship. It is through the party organizations that thieves and demagogues work most effectively. Show your boys that they must not be like "dumb, driven cattle," to be marched to the polls in "blocks of five," but that they are

patriots, who will not put up with any but the best service for the state. Are the roads poor in your town? Are the schools ill-managed? Are the taxes improperly collected? Show the boy that it is the fault, not of a vague, formless thing known as "the town," "the city," "the state," but of each separate voter who fails to be on hand at the public meetings, and boldly demand improvement. Teach him that his duty to his country is a large part of his duty to God, and that his duty to his country in time of peace is very much like the personal duty of every man to his neighbor. Homely drudgery, disagreeable tasks, unselfish and unrewarded labor with tongue, pen, and hand, — this is the duty of the good citizen. The health and prosperity and beauty and fame of his town or city are the business of every citizen, and must be his chief reward for public service. He cannot love his city too well, nor serve it too faithfully. Teaching children these cardinal truths is to teach them good politics.

A bright boy will soon observe the sort of men who hang around city halls and other centres of local government. They will furnish illustrations for many a good text. Teach your boys that these are not properly men, but,

as the poet says, "hungers, thirsts, fevers, and appetites walking," bred of the bad state into which our politics have fallen. Teach them that these men are only trying to get their living without work, or by very easy work; that a large proportion of our office-seekers are lazy men, who, unable to earn a good living at any regular business, wish to foist themselves upon the government. It was a theory of the fathers that low salaries should attach to all public offices, in order that the cupidity of common men should not be excited for them. It was expected that from lofty patriotic motives the chief men of the nation would in turn sacrifice a portion of their valuable time in order to discharge the duties of these offices at the behest of their admiring fellow-citizens. The shocking way in which the practice has degenerated from the original ideal, proves the crying need of political instruction in our families.

Teach boys how dangerous a man becomes when he has "no business but politics." The voters' directories, which have been prepared just before election during late years by several prominent journals, have used this phrase with telling effect. Abraham Lincoln said, "Politics, as a trade, finds most, and leaves nearly

all, dishonest." Teach your boys that they should always be ready to work in order to improve the condition of politics, but that they should expect absolutely no reward for whatever such service they render. The idea that an office should be given as a reward for political labors, should be abhorrent to the feelings of an honorable man. It should be recognized by him as likely to cast a doubt upon his sincerity, just as doing a kindness for a friend for pay looks as if real love were lacking. To use an antiquated phrase, the office should seek the man.

Teach boys that the only way to ascertain the facts of politics is to read the papers on both sides, or all sides. It is impossible at present to get at the truth from reading the journals of any one party. The facts and opinions of several different organs having been carefully read, teach the boy that he must think out therefrom his own political salvation. "The true danger to popular government," says Mr. Lowell, "begins when public opinion ceases because the people are incompetent or unwilling to think. In a democracy it is the duty of every man to think."

This suggests another consideration which often works evil. It is an almost sacred idea

among us that the will of the majority is infallibly right, — that it is the will of God. A demagogue's methods, or a dazzling though sophistical theory, will capture the people from time to time. Show your boys that

“ Few sometimes may know when thousands err.”

It is often the “remnant” which saves the people. This “remnant” usually supplies the leaders who think.

One of the most difficult things to explain to children (and to everybody else) is that men may be dangerous and deeply dishonest, when outwardly they are gentlemanly and attractive. Tell them of those exquisite flowers, the odor of which is sweet but laden with death. Read to them of William M. Tweed, whose gigantic thefts almost bankrupted a great city, and yet who read a chapter in his Bible every day, and possessed many kind and even noble traits; of other public men, amiable, brilliant, devoted to their families, but with a lack of moral discernment or conviction somewhere which ruined them.

Constantly there will occur incidents which will illustrate your points. For example, a most respectable countryman went down to the capital of his State to see about some bills in

which he was interested, and gave the following account of his experience: —

“Mr. B. met me at the train, and took me down to the hotel in his own carriage. The next day he invited me to dinner. Well, — I was surprised to see what sort of a man he really was. You know how the papers go on about him. You would think that he had horns and hoofs at the very least; but he is no scoundrel at all. He is a gentleman, a real nice man, and he talks like a book. I wish you could hear him.”

Yet Mr. B. was one of the most dangerous “practical politicians” at that time in the State, — a man who believed that all methods were fair in politics, and who often carried his points by “bamboozling” simple men, by his assumed interest in them, and by his courteous manners.

Again, a lady was stopping with her fourteen-year-old nephew in a back country town of Maine one rainy day, when the storekeeper of the place, in speaking of voting, remarked: “I don’t gen’ally vote; but when one o’ the bosses is anxious enough to come ’n get me, why, then I’ll vote, or if they’ll give me a couple o’ dollars, to pay for my time and my fare on the cars, I’ll vote.”

"Why," said the boy quickly, "that's bribery."

"Oh! not e'zackly," said the store-keeper, shuffling about rather uneasily. "Oh, no! That just pays me for my time 'n trouble. I don't get nothin' for my *vote*."

Impress it upon the boys that any tampering with the ballot is perilous. Open, free discussion is the only proper mode of influencing men. Just as soon as any sort of tangible benefit comes in, there is corruption.

In the old abolition days Mr. Emerson wrote, "What an education in the public spirit of Massachusetts have been the war songs, speeches, and reading of the public schools! Every district school has been an anti-slavery convention for these two or three years last past."

This was in New England. It would hardly have answered to teach opposition to slavery before the war in a public school in some parts of the North. Special policies may seldom, perhaps, be taught in public institutions; but the broad principles of pure politics can and should be taught. For instance, a lesson in Civil Service Reform may be given without uttering those well-worn words, by teaching these lines from Ruskin: "The first necessity

of social life is the clearness of the national conscience in enforcing the law, — *that he should keep who has justly earned.*" Children may be taught the vulgarity and inherent shame of office-seeking; something of the protean forms of bribery; the schemes for trading votes; the duty that lies on every voter to vote; the danger of getting one-sided opinions; the often insidious charms of the demagogue; and other features of politics which have been mentioned. None of this is partisan instruction. It is simply the elementary ethics of the science of government.

Jacob Riis affirms that the foreigners, who have so often fallen heir to our city governments are seldom villains, but are probably the victims of crass ignorance. There is a moral ignorance which is even more prevalent than intellectual ignorance. These men are often afflicted with both forms of stupidity. Why should they not be? Who has ever taught them better?

To the task, then, of the proper political instruction of the young under their charge, should be devoted the best energies of every man or woman who reads these lines. The effect may not be felt during the present generation, even if thousands of mothers should

begin the work to-morrow; but, like all faithful labor, it will ultimately bear fruit.

“Thou canst not see grass grow, how sharp soe'er thou be;
Yet that the grass has grown, thou presently shalt see.
So, though thou canst not see thy work now prosper-
ing, know
The fruit of every work-time without fail shall show.”

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